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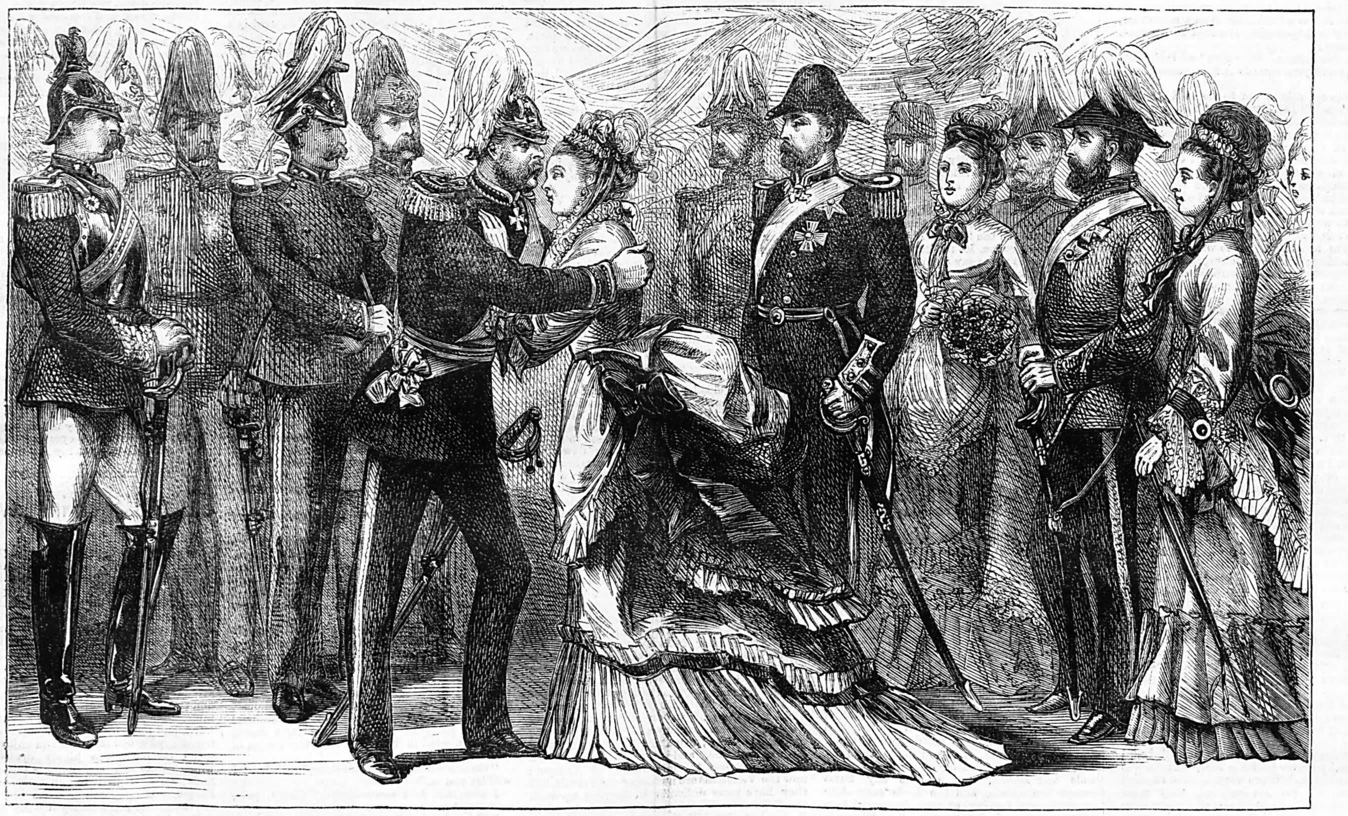
The Czar and his Daughter.

The first meeting of the Emperor, Alexander II. of Russia and his daughter, the Duchess of Edinburgh, on his arrival in England, was one of the most memorable and interesting incidents connected with the Imperial visit. The separation of father and daughter had not lasted long enough to create the customary feeling of reconcilement to absence.

The running aground of the Emperor's yacht, just as he was leaving the harbour of Flushing, unfortunately made all the arrangements at Gravesend useless, and rendered it necessary for the landing to take place at Dover. The invitation of the Mayor to the inhabitants to give the Czar a worthy welcome met a cordial response; the people turned out in their thousands; and all the troops available at a short notice were marched down to the Admiralty Pier.

Soon after three o'clock in the afternoon a special train reached Dover from London conveying the Prince of Wales, the Duchess of Edinburgh, and the Duke of Cambridge, in honour of whose arrival a Royal salute was fired from the castle. Till the yachts came quite close the Royal party remained in the railway carriages, and it was 6.20 before the Derjava, with the Czar on board, arrived off the end of the breakwater. "It was pleasant to see,' said the *Times* reporter, "close to the' window of the saloon carriage, the happy face of the Duchess of Edinburgh, always turned towards the vessel which was bringing back to her those she loved best. Her father she had not seen for three months, and though the Duke of Edinburgh had scarcely been absent for one round of the sun, that was still a long parting, for it was the first since the day when we had watched her as she stood by his side before the twin altars of the Winter Palace." As the vessel touched the shore, the Emperor, who looked tall and handsome in his garter riband and General's uniform, leant over the rail and spoke to his daughter, the Grand Duchess. His tender affection was shown in a manner truly noble and dignified. On the arrangements for the landing being completed, the Royal personages passed on board. The Emperor embraced his daughter fondly, fervently clasping her in his arms, and kissing her again and again. He also greeted the Prince of Wales, Prince Arthur, and the Duke of Edinburgh, who wore his Black Sea Commodore's uniform, and who now took his place by the side of his wife, whose face reflected the tenderness of her emotions. After presentations had taken place, the Emperor landed, and, with his daughter on his arm, was conducted to the saloon carriage.



THE CZAR AND HIS DAUGHTER.

Darwinian Colloquy.

In the illustration called "A Darwinian Colloquy," we see a worthy old-fashioned pair of country people, who have wandered into the domicile of a travelling showman, surveying, with curious and child-like interest, the performing monkey, in soldier's uniform, who sits resting himself after his labours, wearing the while a grave, melancholy, world-weary cast of countenance. The drum and tambourine, the popgun and spent paper hoops, suggest the kind and amount of work which the poor monkey must go through daily to keep his lazy master in tankards of ale. In the platter, near the woe-begone creature squatted on the board, there is not a particle of food, and the bottle, we may also feel sure, does not contain a single drop of drink. Perhaps this accounts so far for his lugubrious look. The two visitors, with the curious, kindly, yet half-bewildered expression on their faces, have evidently stumbled, in their colloquy, on some knotty point in Darwinism which has puzzled wiser heads. To the unsophisticated old dame, who is pressing her hands together in astonishment, the monkey may seem to bear a striking family resemblance to friends of her acquaintance. If we could only hear her speak, she might be found addressing her wondering words first to the one, and then to the other—to the old man by her side and next to the military monkey, sitting gravely, sadly watchful, like a tired sentinel, on the bench.

Feathered Friends.

There is the pleasant rustic air of a cottier's yard in the picture which represents the little girl, seated in a home-made minature waggon, visited by a small flock of geese which make free with the tops of the couple of carrots she holds in her hand. She does not seem at all put about by the propinquity of so many gabblers, though geese are known sometimes to have tempers of their own, especially when they are thwarted in their efforts to obtain surreptitious possession of coveted food. The four goslings that have taken up their quarters in a vessel for holding food, are not likely to be left undisturbed when the mother geese draw near, always ravenous though they have little to do all day but eat and drink. The artist has hit upon a fine natural effect by representing an ambitious gosling in the act of rising up and catching the water between its bills as it falls from the old wooden spout.

In Commemoration.

The visit of the Czar of Russia to this country has excited so much interest that a good likeness of his Imperial Majesty, such as we have obtained for this number, cannot fail to prove acceptable to our readers. Alexander II. succeeded Nicholas on the 2nd of March, 1855. In early manhood, when his health had been impaired by the hard discipline imposed upon him by his father, he went for change and relaxation to the Court of Hesse-Darmstadt, where he remained till his marriage with the Princess Marie, daughter of the Grand Duke Louis II. It was during the Crimean war that he ascended the Russian throne, and he showed in the first instance his resolution to carry out the policy of his father by going personally to the spot, and encouraging the soldiery in their resistance. However, the war was no sooner at an end than Alexander made it manifest to Europe that he was animated by a better spirit than Nicholas, and that he was anxious to prevent the Eastern Question becoming again a bone of contention. From the period of the Crimean war down to the present time his greatest achievement has been the emancipation of the serfs—a great work which shall redound in history to the honour of his name. He has also, during his prosperous reign, contributed to the development of the material resources of Russia by giving every encouragement to the construction of railways and telegraph lines.

The portrait of the Czar is accompanied by another of the distinguished diplomatist, Prince Gortschakoff, who is considered to have much of the astuteness of Bismarck, and who succeeded in getting the Treaty of 1856 completely erased, as if it had never existed, and the Crimean war had never been fought.

The Kremlin—an engraving of which is given beneath the portraits of the Czar and Prince Gortschakoff—gives a striking effect to the view of Moscow by its high walls and crowded towers. This magnificent citadel has been thus described: "The Kremlin composes the principal buildings, as the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin, founded in 1326, a small but gorgeously decorated edifice; the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael, containing the tombs of all the Czars down to the time of Peter the Great; the Church of the Annunciation, the floor of which is paved with jaspers, agates, and carnelians of various shapes; the Tower of Ivan Veliki, 200 feet in height, and surmounted by a magnificent gilded dome; the Czar Kolokol (King of Bells), the greatest bell in the world; several palaces and collections of arms and other antiquities; and the arsenal, surrounded by the splendid trophy of 850 cannons taken from the French."

Walking Slave Skeletons.

Papers laid before Parliament give an account of a recent visit of Captain F. Elton, First Assistant to the Agency at Zanzibar, to the Mainland of East Africa, to see to the carrying into effect the provision of the treaty of June, 1873, with the Sultan of Zanzibar, that natives of Indian States under British protection shall not possess slaves. Captain Elton went into country hitherto absolutely unexplored by any white man. He gave free papers to nearly 300 slaves; the majority seem to have elected to remain with their former masters, but in one case it is mentioned that a man's slaves all took advantage of their feeedom to leave him, including a girl who was his own daughter by a slave woman, and who begged to be protected from him. The treaty with the Sultan prohibits the export of slaves from his territories on the mainland, but the transport of slaves on the land is greater than before, and Captain Elton had to be a helpless looker-on as slave caravans passed him on the way to the coast, with above 4000 slaves, whose owners did not conceal their expectation that they could be smuggled across to the island of Pembra, or north from Lamoo, where the demand is very great. From 30 to 40 dollars are paid for each slave delivered at a port to be named, the purchaser taking the risk of the sea passage. It is stated that our squadron is not strong enough to maintain such a chain of well-manned boats as to stop the sea traffic, and thereby the land traffic. The sufferings of the slaves in the long marches on the mainland are very great. Some are said to be above a year in the gangs. At Kisiju a trade has sprung up of buying children unable to march further, and half-dead, fattening them up, and then reselling them; the place seemed "full of walking skeletons." Captain Elton describes the "horrible state" of a gang of lads and women he met; they were chained together with iron neckrings, and were torn with thorns and covered with filth; their bodies were frameworks, and their skeleton limbs clothed with wrinkled parchment-like skin. His mission was confined to Indian slave-holders, but he could easily have set these 200 slaves at liberty, and he says the temptation was strong "to cast all adrift, and give them, at any rate, a chance of starving to death peaceably in the woods." In one instance, in January last, Mr. Hartley, a young student, belonging to the Universities' Mission, injudiciously went up to a slave caravan alone, and an altercation arose which resulted in his being savagely attacked by the Arab drivers, and rescued from them in a very precarious condition. The Arabs boast of evading the treaty, and jeer about our inability to stop the traffic. It is doubtful whether the Sultan has the means of suppressing the land traffic, and his orders (if unacceptable) are very little regarded at the coast; but he told Captain Prideaux recently that if it could be proved that the governor of any of his ports connived at the export of slaves, he would imprison him for life.

Balloon Adventure.

A balloon experience of an exciting character is related from San Francisco. The balloon was of the "monster" class, 60,000 feet of gas being required to inflate it. A crew of seven, including two ladies, started to enjoy the sensation. Some one in Alameda, when the balloon passed over that spot, amused himself by firing a shot at it, and the sound being distinctly heard by the balloon passengers could scarcely have enhanced their comfort. After thirty-eight minutes of travelling the company came to the resolution that they had had enough of it, so the anchor was dropped with 100 feet of rope, to which distance from the ground they had lowered themselves. Owing to the rate at which they were being propelled by the current of air, a mile a minute, the rope attached to the anchor broke, when the anchor caught on a shanty, the window and sashes of which were destroyed. By the breaking of the rope and the liberation of the weight which the anchor constituted, the balloon was so lightened that it suddenly bounded upwards a height of 400 feet, when a quick snap and tear were heard, and it was seen that "the balloon had burst." Orders were instantly given for all hands to get to the bottom of the basket, and pack themselves as close as possible. Down with terrible velocity sped the car in a slanting direction, struck the ground, and was capsized, after which it was dragged for some 300 yards, "the seven occupants, huddled underneath the basket with ropes and sandbags, rolling on the top of each other, and being squeezed and jammed as though they were sardines." Fortunately this descent took place where help could reach the voyagers, and no time was lost in cutting the car from the balloon and extricating the occupants. A broken leg was the worst injury sustained.

That Dreadful Tramp:

AN AMERICAN STORY.

“Well, Martha,” said Aunt Emma, entering the room where her niece sat at work, “here I am, and in a pretty fix too. What on earth I'm going to do I can't tell. There—don't come near me; for all I know, you may catch something if you do.”

“I'm not afraid of catching anything?” said Martha. “What has happened now? Theodore taken the measles, or Uncle Vance the whooping-cough?”

“For all *I* know, they're well,” said Aunt Emma, “though in such times as these, with all sorts of catching things about, who is to tell who'll have 'em next? They're both down at New York, and they are coming home Saturday night, and I've made fine preparations for them. What do you suppose I've taken into my house? Well, it's a tramp. And this morning, first thing I knew, in flew my new help, that I fetched home only last week, and says she:

“ ‘Missus, I'm off.’

“ ‘Why, Bridget?’ says I.

“ ‘That tramp,’ says she, ‘has got the small-pox! I know the signs of it well, and I don't stay where it is an hour.’

“And before I got my clothes on, she was off. And that awful tramp moaning and talking like a loon in the kitchen bedroom, and very bad with it, as Dr. Praddigle says, for I sent for him at once. And what *shall* I do? I'm going to start for the town, and have the hospital send for him at once; but there will be papa and Theo coming home, perhaps, before they get him off. And infection in the house, and *I* the cause of it! O dear! that horrible tramp!”

“Poor soul!” said Martha. “Some poor man travelling to find work, perhaps. Some one's father, or son, or husband, no doubt.”

“Yes, it is a pity,” said Aunt Emma; “but I can't help thinking of Theo.”

Martha pondered for a while.

“Is black Jim going to run away?” she asked.

“No,” said Aunt Emma. “He had small-pox once, and he is not afraid of it. O dear, Martha, I can't keep it out of my mind that Theo catches everything so easy, and will be so likely to take it.”

“Yes,” said Martha, “a mother is naturally anxious; but I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll go over and settle matters. You stay here with mamma, and telegraph to uncle to come straight here, instead of going home. You see I'm never afraid of any disease, however contagious, and I've been vaccinated so lately.”

“You? What an idea—a young unmarried woman! Suppose you're marked with it?” cried Aunt Emma. “I shan't allow it. All for a straggler too—a poor miserable creature in a red shirt! If it was a friend, or even a neighbour, or anybody of importance, it would be different. But a tramp!”

“A human being all the same,” said Martha.

“What will your mama say?” screamed Aunt Emma.

“She always allows me to do as I please,” said Martha. “Tell her I may not, probably shall not, be back for several days. I've had experience with sick people, and I know that a journey in an ambulance, over miles of rough road, and all the delay consequent on the proceedings of charity, may kill this poor man. Your house is quite isolated. The kitchen and kitchen chamber are scarcely a part of the house; and, if Jim will help me, I'll do my part. It's nothing to what I did at the hospital.”

“Oh, dear,” said Aunt Emma, “I know you went to the hospital after the war, but wounds ain't catching; and being engaged to William Price, I suppose you felt romantic about soldiers; but small-pox and a straggler is a very different sort of thing.”

Martha's eyes filled with tears.

“I loved all soldiers for Willie's sake,” she said; “that is very true. But it is partly because of my loss that I feel it my duty to go now. I never knew whether any woman was with my Will when he died, nor how he died, nor where. If some one could tell me that they nursed him well in his last hours, my heart would be lighter. And this man who is suffering, and within my reach, shall not be neglected. If he dies, some other woman may know that the best was done for her dead; and if he lives, I may help to save him for wife and children, or poor old mother.” And Martha hurried out of the room, and returned in her hat and shawl.

The war between North and South had not long been over; and Martha, whose betrothed husband was among the missing when the troops returned to that quiet place in the Granite State, had been an active nurse in the hospital for several months. Aunt Emma knew that she might as well hope to keep the tide from coming in, as to keep Martha from what she thought her duty, and said no more.

“Martha knows what to do. She is a sensible gal,” was all the mother said, when she came in from the pea patch with her apron full of peas. “She'll manage finely, and I'm glad to have you and your folks here, sister Emma.”

So Aunt Emma telegraphed for her husband and son, and with many self-reproaches awaited the result of what she called “Martha's ridiculous caper.”

“The tramp” was a man with a full beard that seemed to cover half his face, and he was in a state of high delirium when Martha reached the house. As for his features, they were swollen and spotted almost out of human likeness, and his shabby clothes were very coarse and scanty.

He lay in what was known as the “odd hands' bedroom,” and with him were the doctor and black Jim.

“You're a brave girl,” said the doctor, when Martha told him of her intention; “and I've no doubt you'll be quite safe. I'll do my part, Miss Martha, and Jim will help us.”

“Sartin sure, massa,” said Jim.

“The long journey would be death to him,” said the doctor. “He's awfully worn out now. Perhaps you'll save some poor woman's husband for her, my dear.”

Then the black man, obeying the doctor's instructions, clothed the poor delirious patient in clean linen, which Martha had brought with her; and the old clothes were burnt, and a trinket which had been tied about the stranger's neck safely put away by black Jim's honest hands. And Martha Bruce took up her weary task, knowing exactly what lay before her. She had left a happy home and pleasant surroundings, to become a sort of enchanted princess in a castle full of horror to all others. She had taken upon herself a ban which made friends fear her. Not one of her companions would have approached those infected walls for any consideration; nor would she have desired it. Jim was devoted; but the poor object on the bed, so terrible to look upon, had no gratitude for her. Deliriously he raved and gabbled, regarding her as his enemy more than half the time. The disease had closed his eyes almost from the first, and his imagination had its own wild way, unsoftened by any glimpse of her pretty, sweet womanly face. It would have seemed a thankless task to any one but a true Christian.

Jim provided food without leaving the place, and every now and then a bowl of custard or a pie or a cake was found perched upon a gate post, at a safe distance, with woeful little notes from Aunt Emma attached to it. So the days glided by, lonely and uncheered; and, worst of all, the patient was growing worse. What manner of man he was in his natural condition she could not tell. His own mother would not have known him now. But his language was not that of an ignorant person, though his clothing had been so poor. Martha began to feel a strange interest in him, to wonder what his story might have been, and to think that if he died she should wish to know who he was, that she might tell his friends all that there was to tell about him.

“Missy,” said Jim one night, “I's powerful sleepy. S'pose Missy be skeered to sit up alone?”

“No, Jim,” said Martha. “Lie down and sleep upon the kitchen lounge. I will call you if I want you.”

Then she took up her watch in the infected room. She also was sleepy, but she fought with slumber bravely. Outside the rain beat against the panes; within the patient babbled in an awesome sort of way. Hitherto he had talked of goblins and of fiends, now he seemed addressing real people.

“I say, Johnny Reb.—I say—just a drop. I'm burning with thirst. A mouthful of water and a piece of bread. I say, I'd give it to you—if— Lord help us! look at his feet—look! the one that died just now. Starving! Starving! O for the scraps the dogs used to have at home! Oh! Ah!—Ah! he's crossed the dead line, and they've shot him down. Lord help us!”

The girl was on her feet, and at his side.

“He must have been a soldier,” she said, as she held the cooling drink to his lips. “An Andersonville prisoner, perhaps.”

The man swallowed the contents of the cup greedily.

“Good!” he said.

It was his first acknowledgment of any comfort or alleviation, and it did the nurse's heart good.

“Ah, you're not so bad, Johnny Reb. Get it for me, won't you? It was here. You took it. Give it back—”

“What?” said Martha, speaking slowly. “Tell me what.”

“Her picture,” said the man. He felt about his neck. “Ah! give it back,” he moaned. “I want to die with it here. It can't do you any good—give it back.”

The girl remembered that Jim had taken something from the man's neck when he took off his weather-stained garments, and had placed it in a little tin box on a certain shelf in the room. Leaving the bedside she went to the box and peeped in. There lay a plain gold locket.

“His sweetheart, or his wife, I suppose,” she said to herself, and with a natural curiosity opened the case. Within it was her own portrait—the little photograph which she had given William Price when they parted.

The poor girl felt that she needed all her courage. The hope that suddenly possessed her seemed like madness. She crept back to the bedside, and looked at the face upon the pillow. There was no possibility of recognising that. The hair was like William's, but there was a bald spot on the crown, and William had worn no beard whatever.

“Oh, Father in heaven!” cried Martha, folding her hands and pressing them against her heart, “teach me the truth. If this is William lying here before me, let me know it. If I am dreaming, cure me of my madness.”

“Here is the picture,” she said, in a calmer tone, a few moments after. “Whose picture is it?”

“Hers,” said the man, groping in his blindness.

The locket touched his hand; he clasped it fervently.

“I've got it now,” he said. “You shall never have it again. I told her it should die with me. It shall, Martha—dear Martha.”

And then Martha knew that it was the one whom she had mourned as dead who lay before her: loathsome to the sight; unconscious of her presence; doomed, perhaps, to death; but she had found him. It was he. A strange mixture of horror and delight possessed her, and she fell upon her knees and prayed—not calmly now as she had prayed every night for the life of the man she had nursed so carefully, but as love prays for love in its hour of greatest peril.

Through the night she watched—through the night she listened to the wild talk that told her the story of three years of parting, and in the dawn saw a strange change take place. The man lay still and silent; the bosom hardly moved; his breathing was inaudible. Was it for the better, or for the worse? She could not tell. Wild thoughts of running for the doctor, through the night and the storm, possessed her. She knew that Jim would say that he could not go until daybreak. Should she wake Jim, and tell him that it was her William lying here before them?

She asked herself these questions, but something kept her quiet. Her comprehension of the man's condition, drawn from her hospital experience, told her that nothing would avail. She must wait. Oh, that waiting! The gray dawn changed to crimson day. The stormy winds had ceased, and a blue sky burst through the clouds, and the birds sang clear and shrill, and looking at that disfigured face she saw a blessed change upon it. The eyes were open, and turned upon her, and they were the eyes of a man in his senses. She could not speak; she could only look at him. And then a faint voice fell upon her ears:

“It can't be Martha, after all.”

And she knew that it was her lover, indeed, and that God had spared him to her.

“Martha,” cried Aunt Emma, rushing down the path pell-mell, but stopping, with due regard to caution a yard from her niece. “My gracious! and you've not caught it; and the tramp is well. And you've disinfected the house, and put on new clothes; and— Dear, how well you look! And I suppose the poor straggler has gone home?”

“Not yet,” said Martha. “And when he goes I'm going with him.”

“Eh!” cried Aunt Emma.

“I'm going to marry your straggler,” said Martha.

Aunt Emma gave a faint shriek.

“O Aunt!” cried Martha, “it was Will—my Will. It is my Will come back to me.”

And then she told them how, after a long and horrible imprisonment, her lover had sought his home, begging his way sometimes, and how, in the first delirium of the disease which had seized upon him, he had sought shelter in Aunt Emma's home, not guessing it was that of a friend, and only knowing that his steps were too feeble to bear him longer on his way.

“And the doctor says I have saved his life, Aunt,” said Martha. “And he's just as handsome as ever, and I am so happy!”

“And you went to nurse him when you thought he was only a straggler!” said Aunt Emma. “It's the Lord's providence.”

Backwood Crusoes.

A French lady has the following among her Canadian experiences: New Year's Day, 1872, was one of those exceptionally beautiful days when hope is generated in the saddest heart, and when the most pressing cares and anxieties retire for a time at least into the background of our lives. The sky was blue and clear, the sun bright, and the air quite soft and balmy for the time of year. We had before and afterwards some bitter cold and gloomy weather, the thermometer being at times forty degrees below zero during the winter. We had the greatest difficulty in keeping ourselves sufficiently clothed for such a season. All people coming to the bush bring clothes far too good for the rough life they lead there. In coming out, we had no means of providing any special outfit, and therefore brought only the ordinary wardrobes of genteel life. All silks, delicate shawls, laces, and ornaments are perfectly useless here. Every article I possess of that kind is carefully put away, and will probably never see daylight again. We found everything we had taken of woollen, warm plaid shawls, winter dresses, thick flannels, furs, &c., most useful; of these we had a tolerable stock, and we put one thing over another as the cold increased till we must often have presented the appearance of feather-beds tied with a string in the middle. As to our feet and legs it was not a trifling matter to encase them securely. Our delicate French boots and slippers were of no use here. Stockings drawn over stockings, French *chaussons*, and over all moccasins or large stockings of your brothers', even these hardly kept us warm enough. Nor were the gentlemen a whit behind us in wrapping up. Your brother sometimes wore six pairs of thick woollen stockings at a time, with sea-boots drawn over all; shirts, jerseys, and coats in proportion. Your brother-in-law and C. had goat-skin coats brought from France, such as are worn by the shepherds there, and in which they looked like Crusoes.

Lace-Making in France.

There is no kind of work which is more completely or essentially feminine than that of lace the produce of the pillow, which is above all price, and yet so poorly paid. Valenciennes has almost ceased to furnish the lace which bears its name. It is a difficult kind of work, requiring a very long apprenticeship, and wholly absorbing to women engaged in it; whilst the payment is so small, that the industrious population of the north of France find means to occupy themselves more advantageously. It requires many months, sometimes even a year, to weave a piece of three French yards; and as the lace-maker cannot afford to wait for her wages during so long a period, it is customary for the employer to pay when a third is finished, as well as to find the thread; by which arrangement he is sometimes a loser. Thus, there are but three lace-makers left in Valenciennes: one, who makes the old and real kind, earns about a shilling a day; the other two, fabricating the sort of lace which is imitated in Belgium, receive fifteen-pence for a day of twelve hours. Arras is a centre for a large manufacture of common lace, but the women are in general poor and ignorant. The kind called the Point d'Alençon is made under different arrangements; whilst at Valenciennes the net and the figure are carried on at the same time, the Point d'Alençon is divided into several departments. They distinguish between the tracers, the net-makers, the lace-menders, the groundwork-makers, those who work the holes and the slender cord which surrounds and strengthens the designs. An apprenticeship of three months is sufficient to learn all these varieties; and provided they do not spoil their hands by heavy work, they can attend to all the lighter cares of housekeeping, lay down the pillow and take it up again as if it were knitting. Yet tenpence a day is all they can earn; a very small number may manage to get a shilling or thirteen-pence; the outlay, however, is small for the apparatus, nothing but the pillow, the bobbins, and the pins being wanted. Sometimes the young girls work alone; sometimes they collect together to talk whilst moving their bobbins; in the evening they economise light by assembling in one workshop. It is a delicate kind of work, which gives a certain kind of elegance to those who are occupied with it, and contributes much to the comfort of the family. Those who transfer and mend old lace, form another interesting branch of the needle-women. Lace is one of the few victories of handicraft over machine work; so far, nothing but a very inferior imitation having been produced. The efforts of the minister Colbert were very great to introduce superior lace-making into France, equal to or surpassing that of Venice. He had recourse, according to the custom of the day, to making it into a privilege; he was resisted, and threatened to send a regiment against the lace-women of Alençon; now the Venetians are no longer their rivals, but they have some difficulty in keeping up with the Belgians. All the patterns are designed in Paris; but the skilful workmanship and lower wages give a superiority to Belgium.—*Chambers's Journal.*

The Great Dismal Swamp.

On the edge of Norfolk county we entered the Great Dismal Swamp, which extends far downward over some of the northern portions of North Carolina, and is intersected by canals, on which there is quite an extensive transportation business. The “swamp” is a succession of wild and, apparently, irreclaimable marshes, through which run black currents of water, and in the midst of which spring up thousands of dead tree trunks. Many of these trunks are charred or blackened by the progress of some recent fire. Some are fantastically shaped, and have been imagined to bear resemblance to well-known statues, and the passer-by has his attention invited to the “Column Vendome.” For miles the eye encounters nothing save the bewildering stretch of swamp and dead trees, or the dreary country covered with rank growth of pines and underbrush, gradually running into swamp lands. The only signs of life are occasional groups of negroes about some saw-mill on a “hummock,” or a glimpse of dusty forms on a barge floating along one of the Stygian canals, as the train glides smoothly and swiftly by. Drummond's Lake, penetrated by a feeder from the “Dismal Swamp Canal,” is about thirty miles long.—*E. King.*

The Face at the Pane.

“Afraid!” cried out I, with a laugh. “Why on earth should I be afraid?”

And I suppose my face must have mirrored forth the careless independence of my spirit, for my brother's rugged countenance brightened up as I spoke.

We lived alone upon a solitary road, miles away from any human dwelling place, in one of those antique gable-ended farm-houses which look so picturesque to an artist's eye in the summer time, and so indescribably desolate when November gales are howling around the chimney-tops, or winter snows heaping up their feathery pearl upon the door-stone. We—that is the old bed-ridden aunty, my brother Robert, and myself. As for a servant girl—dear me, when I became rheumatic, or lost the use of my limbs, I might need one, not before.

“Well, mind you don't let any one in, unless it is a neighbour,” said Bob, buttoning up his shaggy overcoat, and lowering his voice so that Aunt Jemima should not hear his words. For Aunt Jemima was apt to be seized with fits of nervous apprehension at the most inconvenient times. “Because, you know, there's only two women of you, and——”

“Go along with yourself, Bob, and don't talk nonsense,” said I, with an air of dignity. “As if I wasn't quite able to take care of myself without your advice. Nobody has been here in a week, and I don't think the rush is going to begin to-night.”

“The loaded revolver is on the top shelf next to the bag of hops,” added Bob, “and the big stick——”

“I'll take the big stick to you, if you don't clear out,” cried I, merrily—and so Bob mounted old Nanny and trotted away.

We had just received one hundred pounds as a legacy from a distant relative, who had no nearer friends, and Bob, and I, and Aunt Jemima, all agreed—for once entirely unanimous—that so much money ought not to remain over-night in the house.

“Suppose there should be a fire?” said I.

“Suppose a gang of masked burglars should break in!” suggested Aunt Jemima, who had been reading the papers.

“Suppose the rats and mice should gnaw their way into the old hair trunk!” said Bob.

So Bob was taking the money away to the bank, twenty miles away, and I and Aunt Jemima were left all alone.

“Dear me,” said Aunt Jemima, “that's twice my needle's dropped, and stuck in the floor! We're going to have company!”

“I hope not,” said I, “with nothing in the house but coarse bread, and pork, and a basket of eggs.”

“And there's a winding sheet in the candle,” gloomily added Aunt Jemima, who was addicted to harmless little superstitions. “Somebody's going to die.”

“I think it's extremely likely,” I observed, with philosophy.

“I've had a creepy feeling down my back all day,” said Aunt Jemima, “just as if someone was measuring me for my shroud! Are you sure the doors are all bolted, Gertrude?”

“Quite certain, aunt. I bolted them myself.”

“And nails over all the windows?”

“Every one of them. Come now, aunty, dear, let me mix your hot drink, and tie on your night cap nicely. We're just as safe as if there was a hollow square of soldiery all around us!”

But in spite of my re-assurances, Aunt Jemima persisted in going to sleep with a flat-iron and two pokers under her pillow.

And then, mercy on me, how she *did* snore, to be sure.

I sat before the fire until past nine o'clock, finishing a pair of grey mixed stockings that I was knitting for Bob. And then, rising with a yawn, I looked out of the window. It was raining and—

Merciful Heaven! I started back with a low cry, as I saw a white, wild face pressed suddenly against the outer side of the pane—a face made paler still by the contrast of a heavy black moustache, and hair the most raven-jet I ever saw.

My first impulse was to run and hide, my second to face the matter out.

“What do you want?” I asked, opening the window a little way. “Who are you?”

“I am a belated traveller. I need food—rest—rags to bind up my hurt foot. See!”

And then I saw that one of his feet was bleeding.

I hesitated an instant. He perceived my doubt.

“You are afraid to let the vagrant in,” he said, bitterly. “Well, I don't wonder much. But there's no danger. Let me in, as you have a dear father or brother of your own. Give me but a crust of bread, a drink of milk. I will go on my way with the earliest dawn of morning.”

My decision was taken at once. His pale face, his blood-stained foot, his piteous voice, so unlike the professional whine of the regular mendicant, all appealed to my womanly pity. I remembered my brother's caution, but I also remembered that there was an unused one-storey wing, on the north end of the house, fitted up in a rude sort of way for the occasional sleeping place of the additional farm hands that we needed in the height of the season of harvest.

“Go around to the farther door,” said I. “I will let you in.”

I admitted him accordingly. Gaunt, pale, and limping, he came in.

“There is a bed,” said I. “And here is food. While you eat, I will get salve and a bandage for your foot.”

When I returned, he was eating as greedily as if he had not tasted food for a week, and drinking long draughts of coffee.

“You are hungry, said I,” kneeling to my task.

“I hope you never may be as near starvation as I have been this day,” he responded, in a low, thrilling voice. “Thank you, young woman—, the foot feels easier now.”

So I left him.

I had meant to slip across the bolt, on the outside of the door that led to the other portion of the house; but I now perceived for the first time, that the bolt was not there. Bob must have taken it out to use in the stables.

A thrill, half of apprehension, passed through me at this unwelcome discovery.

“No matter,” said I, valiantly, to myself, “I must risk it. I dare say we are all as safe as if there were a score of bolts on the door. Only I'm glad Aunt Jemima sleeps so soundly.”

So I went to bed and fell fast asleep in less than fifteen minutes.

The sound of the old wooden clock striking three—or something else—roused me, and opening my eyes, I saw the shrouded light of a dark lantern in the room, and by its glimmer three men were searching the contents of the old hair trunk, that stood underneath the window.

I started up with a scream—probably the most imprudent thing I could have done—but I did not stop at that instant of terror to measure consequences.

“Stop that chit's squeaking pipe,” muttered a low, threatening tone, and the next instant an iron hand was upon my throat; my eyeballs seemed starting from their sockets, and a horrible death by suffocation seemed closing around me.

In the self-same second, however, I saw the deadly white face of the man I had so recently succoured and fed, in the doorway; I heard the click of a pistol being cocked. My first impression was that he belonged to the gang—that he had made an entrance into the house through my weak pity, and afterwards admitted his comrades; but oh! how unjustly I judged him.

“Let go that girl's throat, or I'll send a brace of bullets through your brain!” he shouted; and instantaneously I was free. “Now, then, get out of this! Drop everything. Quick! Do you see this pistol. It carries charges enough to send every one of you to kingdom come, quicker than lightning.”

His eloquence was of a most persuasive nature. One of the men dropped a red leather pocket-book of papers that I recognised as Bob's; another let fall a calico bag, containing Aunt Jemima's six silver tea-spoons, and all three tumbled out of the door in hot haste. My unknown friend calmly examined the fastenings.

“The bolt has been prized back,” said he, “but I can fix it in a minute. And even if I did not, I hardly think they will be likely to come back again, after the lesson I have read them.”

“How can I ever thank you?” I cried, almost hysterically, in my mingled terror and gratitude.

“I was thinking to-night, as I watched you bind up my foot, that I would like to do something for you,” he said, in a low tone; “and I have done it. Good night.”

Early the next morning I carried a tray of breakfast into him, but he was gone. From that time to this I have never seen nor heard of him, except that once in an illustrated newspaper I saw his portrait, given as that of one of the most dangerous burglars of the day, who had recently made his escape from a convict prison, after half-strangling two of the warders; and I shuddered to recollect how utterly we poor women were at his mercy on that December night, and of how he spared and shielded us!

Bob never knew of that night's adventure. Aunt Jemima never knew. It is a secret that I keep to myself.

Three of Landor's Cameos.

DEFIANCE.

Catch her and hold her if you can.
See, she defies you with her fan,
Shuts, opens, and then holds it spread
In threatening guise above your head.
Ah! why did you not start before
She reached the porch and closed the door?
Simpleton! will you never learn
That girls and time will not return?
Of each you should have made the most;
Once gone, they are for ever lost.
In vain your knuckles knock your brow,
In vain will you remember how
Like a slim brook the gamesome maid
Sparkled, and ran into the shade.

ON MUSIC.

Many love music but for music's sake;
Many because her touches can awake
Thoughts that repose within the breast half dead,
And rise to follow where she loves to lead.
What various feelings come from days gone by!
What tears from far-off sources dim the eye!
Few, when light fingers with sweet voices play,
And melodies swell, pause, and melt away,
Mind how at every touch, at every tone,
A spark of life hath glistened and hath gone.

MARGARET.

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel;
  My fingers ache, my lips are dry;
Oh if you feel the pain I feel!
  But who could ever feel as I!
No longer could I doubt him true,
  All other men may use deceit;
He always said my eyes were blue,
  And often swore my lips were sweet.

Social Usages in New York.

A person is invited to an “informal” reception. Special pains may be, and often are, taken to impress him with the idea that such a reception is, indeed, “informal.” The idea is very good. The proposition is to bring together a circle of friends in a familiar way, without expensive dress on the part of the guests, or an expensive entertainment on the part of the hostess. It is an attractive sort of invitation, but woe to the man or woman who accepts it according to its terms. The man and the woman who attend in anything but full evening dress will find themselves singular, and most uncomfortable. They have taken their hostess at her word, and find, instead of a party of familiar friends, who can sit down and enjoy an hour of social intercourse, a highly dressed “jam,” which comes late and departs late, and which finds itself treated to an elaborate supper. People have, at last, learned that if there is anything that must be dressed for elaborately, it is an “informal reception,” and that there is really no greater cheat than the invitation which called them together. The consequence is that we have no really informal gatherings of men and women in what we call “society.”

Again, when we invite a guest to dinner at six, we expect him to come at, or before, that hour. It is counted the height of impoliteness for a guest to keep a dinner waiting a moment. This is just as it should be; but when we invite a guest at eight o'clock, to a reception or a party, what then? Why, we do not expect him until nine, we do not ordinarily get him until half-past nine, and are not surprised at his entrance at any subsequent hour before the company breaks up. Why the rule should be good for the dinner that is not good for the assembly does not appear, except that in the case of the dinner it is a question of hot or cold soup that is to be decided. At eight the host and hostess are in their vacant rooms, be-gloved and waiting. They are there for an hour, wishing their guests would come. At last one makes his appearance, and with a guilty look whips up stairs. Then he waits until another joins him, and another, and another, and so at last he descends. All have lost the only opportunity they will have for a pleasant chat with those who have invited them—lost, indeed, the only chance they will have of a look at the flowers, at the pictures, and the enjoyment of an undisturbed chat, with comfortable seats and surroundings. All dread to be first, and so all wait, and thus thrust far into the night the hour of departure. The company that should be at home at eleven, and in bed at half-past eleven, do not find their beds until one the next morning.—*Scribner.*

News Miscellany.

The Queen and Sir C. Dilke.—It is said that her Majesty, having heard something of the Republican opinions of Sir Chas. Dilke, which, of course, were not over pleasant to her, whose only business is Royalty, replied that she used to take him on her knee when he was a child, and stroke his hair. "But, perhaps," added her Majesty, "I stroked it the wrong way."

A Ferocious Polype.—A present was lately made to the Jardin d'Acclimatisation, in Paris, in the form of a polype. The day after its introduction into the aquarium it was found to have caused the death of all the animals around it. The explanation was had on analysing the water of the vessel. The polype was one of those rare animals whose bodies, when immersed in pure water, change it, ere long, into a well-characterised acetic solution. The process wrought by the creature is a curious one; it produces alcohol, and transforms this into vinegar.

Value of an Artist Living and Dead.—There is something (says a London correspondent) very extraordinary in the appreciation recorded to the works of dead painters compared with that obtained by the same works whilst the artists were living. It is impossible to avoid the inference that the estimation must be determined by something utterly apart from the intrinsic excellence of the works themselves. A notable instance occurred the other day. Two pictures by Muller came to the hammer. It is true they were amongst the *chef d'œuvres*, but one, "Gillingham," his birthplace, realised 2050 guineas, and the other, the now well-known "Chess Players," was not to be obtained under 3860. I have frequently heard it asserted in the art world, and without a contradiction, that Muller never received so much as 200 guineas for a picture. How is so great a discrepancy to be accounted for, and where is really the error? If Muller estimated his own merits at but one-half the value which the world now accords them, it is no wonder that, as he is reported to have done, he died of a broken heart.

Rembrandtish Effects at Birmingham Rag-Fair.—The *Birmingham Mail* has the following in a description of the Rag-Fair of that town: In a dark recess sat four or five old crones in a large hole scooped out of rags—for it was a mystic cavern of rags—busily plying large pairs of rusty shears. They had made for themselves soft couches of rags on which to sit, and their patchwork garments would suggest that they were made at odd moments, out of odd rainbow-hued waste pieces of the same materials, and a more curious study for an artist could not have been wished. There was ample scope for quaint "colouring;" the weird figures, the background of gay and sombre coloured scraps, the dim light, and general Rembrandtish effects were unequalled. The crones were busy picking out strips of cloth, cutting off buttons, shearing away linings, and getting the stuff ready for despatch to the wilds of Yorkshire, where "shoddy" reigns supreme. In front of this witches' cave hung a huge bag of rough matting. When the sorted heap assumed goodly dimensions, it was stowed away in this receptacle, and then one of the old ladies—who possessed good flat feet of the "beetle crushing" order—stepped nimbly into it, and proceeded to execute a wild fandango, or ragpicker's jig, which reduced the bulky mass to subdued proportions. Very cheery, not to say "larky" were the old ladies. The atmosphere they worked in was foggy with "fluffy" particles; little wonder, then, that they suggested it was "dry work," and that beer would be acceptable. We sneezed sympathetically, and "paid our footing."

Deplorable Misfortune.—Professor Bunsen, the famous chemist, of Heidelberg, has met with a deplorable misfortune. The manuscript of his new work, which has been four years in preparation, and was looked forward to with great interest by the scientific world, has been accidentally burnt. When a similar misfortune befel the MS. of the first volume of Carlyle's "French Revolution," the stout-hearted recluse of Chelsea began again, and Professor Bunsen must do the same.

Ghost-Shooting in London.—Mr. H. D. Gauntlett, of 24, Notting-hill-terrace, Uxbridge-road, charged Francis Ford Gould with knocking at his door without lawful excuse. From the evidence it appeared that whenever a light is seen in Mr. Gauntlett's house at night, the people exclaim, "There it goes; there it is;" and then they knock furiously at the hall door. "It has gone on," said the unhappy Mr. Gauntlett, "night after night, with furious knocking at the door." But the prisoner in this case was not content with merely knocking at the door, he had his rifle with him and he wanted to "shoot the ghost." And when the police very properly objected to ghost or any other person being shot in a dwelling-house so near a highway, the prisoner, we regret to say, tried to knock the policeman down. We are not ourselves great partisans of ghosts, but so murderous an enmity as that which Mr. Gould seems to feel for them must be kept in check. For we can conceive nothing so calculated to alarm the timid London householder as to have, in the middle of the night, a man, armed with a rifle, knock at the hall door and say, "Any objection to my shooting your ghost, sir?"

Death from Excitement.—The most notable incident of the temperance campaign in New England thus far reported comes from an East Douglas correspondent of the *Springfield Republican*. On Fast Day a praying band of the prominent men and women of the village was organised, which began operations by visiting several club-rooms, where they were well treated, and invited to call again. About noon they called upon Mr. Simpson, a well-known saloon keeper, who politely invited them in, though apparently in a state of great agitation. After praying with him, they began reading the Scriptures, when he suddenly seemed to faint, and fell to the floor. He was immediately taken to his house, but remained insensible, and died in a few hours.

The Brazil Emigrants.—The story told by passengers of the brig Polyxena, should act as a warning against ignorant emigration. Having been deluded by representations made of the great fertility and manifold advantages of the interior of the Empire of Brazil, they were tempted to sell off and emigrate, but on arrival they found, in addition to inconveniencies arising from difference of language and customs, that fever and insects were very prejudicial to health, and the climate very enervating. Work was to be obtained at very remunerative wages, but Europeans were soon struck down by fever, or, while working amidst tropical foliage, had their bodies invaded by insects that bored into their flesh and could with difficulty be extracted, causing most painful swellings. A number of Polyxena's passengers were widows, children, and men, whose health have been impaired. They were kept waiting at Rio several months, supported by the Brazilian Government, and were sent home at the expense of that Government. They report that a great many Europeans at present in Brazil are very desirous of returning.

Is Smoking Recreation?—The Bishop of Manchester addressed a working men's Co-operative Society at Eccles, and while he did not wish to deprive the working men of their pipes or weed, he expressed a wish to see the name of the smoking-room at the institute changed to "recreation-room."

Rhoda Linley's Infatuation.—At the Coleford Police-court, an extraordinary charge was recently preferred by the Rev. W. H. Tetley, an eminent Baptist minister of that town, against Rhoda Linley, a spinster of some 30 years. Mr. Hullet prosecuted, and from his opening remarks it appeared that Miss Linley, who was a member of complainant's chapel, on one occasion sought his advice, and she became so infatuated that ever since Mr. Tetley has been constantly subjected to annoyance. Letters out of number had been written and rejected by him, but of late, directly upon his pronouncing the benediction, the defendant has marched from her pew to the vestry, and insisted that her spiritual guide should marry her. The act had become so frequent that, failing to dissuade Miss Linley not to repeat it, these proceedings were instituted. The bench recommended defendant to enter into sureties without hearing the evidence, which was at length done, the lady stating that she had reasons for her conduct, but if Mr. Tetley never wished to see her again at chapel she would never again trouble him.

A Fox Terrier Killed by a Cat.—At Marylebone Police-court, London, Mr. G. R. Witt, of Springfield-row, St. John's-wood, applied to Mr. D'Eyncourt under the following circumstances: The applicant had had a valuable fox terrier, which was last week bitten by a cat. It was sent to a veterinary surgeon, and afterwards chained up, but it died of hydrophobia. The cat belonged to a baker in the neighbourhood, and as it might bite persons who entered the shop, the applicant asked that an order should be made for its destruction. The owner declined to destroy it because it was a favourite of his daughter's. Mr. D'Eyncourt said he had no power to make such an order, but he directed an officer to call on the owner of the cat, and represent to him the magistrates' opinion that it would be wise to destroy the animal.

Fearful Story of Premature Burial.—The fear of being buried alive probably disturbs few minds but those of the students of Mrs. Crow, Lefanu, Edgar Poe, and other purveyors of horrors. There exist, however, certain localities where it would, apparently, be quite possible to become the victim of so dreadful a fate. A case of premature burial is reported from Salon (Bouches-du-Rhône) which reflects the greatest possible discredit upon all concerned in it. About two years ago, a young couple, residing in this place, had just received the congratulations of their friends on the birth of a child and the convalescence of the mother, when the latter was one evening seized with a fainting fit, so severe as to be mistaken for death even by the physician, who, considering the great heat prevailing at the time, advised the inhumation of the body within six hours. This suggestion was unhappily adopted, but its frightful results only came to light the other day, when the young widower, having expressed his intention of marrying again, the mother of his dead wife claimed her daughter's body, intending to have it re-interred at Marseilles, where she resides. The vault was opened, and to the grief and horror of all present, the coffin was found broken, and the corpse lying by its side, with hair and garments torn and hands bitten through. A judicial inquiry was to take place immediately.

Lancashire Women Larking.—An unfaithful husband has received a rough handling from a number of Lancashire women at Darwen. He had incurred the resentment of certain neighbours by his attentions to a widow in the neighbourhood. On a recent evening a number of women seized him by the legs and arms, knocked his hat off, and threw cayenne pepper in his face; pulled his hair, tore his clothing, inflicted blows upon his head, and "mauled" him so sadly that he roared for mercy. After this sport had been carried on some time two buckets of water were thrown over him. Wet to the skin, and "tattered and torn" he made off home as quickly as he could.

Atrocity by Strikers.—The Chicago *Tribune* says: "Fifteen hands at the Capital City Rolling Mills, Indianapolis, struck recently, and their places were filled by coloured men. Shortly after midnight the fires were started under the boilers, and a few hours later the engineer came along, tested the water-gauges, and found no water. He was about to start the pumps when he discovered that the boilers had been tapped and were perfectly dry. Had he not made the discovery in time the mill would have been blown to atoms, and every person in it killed to a certainty. It is not wonderful that strikers, no matter where or what their provocation, meet with little public sympathy when such atrocities are meditated by some of them. The cause of the working man is incalculably injured by the frequent discovery of such desperate efforts at revenge."

Holy Well of St. Clement.—Another relic of old London has lately passed away; the holy well of St. Clement, on the north of St. Clement Danes Church, has been filled in and covered over with earth and rubble, in order to form part of the foundation of the Law Courts of the future. It is said that penitents and pilgrims used to visit this well as early as the reign of Ethelred, and it was known from time immemorial as "St. Clement's Well." Fitz Stephen speaks of it as one of those excellent springs about the metropolis "whose waters are sweet, salubrious, and clear, and whose tunnels murmur over the shining stones," and to which the scholars from Westminster School and the youth from the City used to saunter in the summer evenings, when as yet the Strand was a country road, with noblemen's mansions on either side. Charles Knight, in his "London," published in 1841, mentions the well as "now covered over with a pump," and he adds that "the well still remains flowing as steadily and as freshly as ever." It has often been supposed that this well supplied the old Roman bath, in Strand-lane, but this is a mistake, the water which feeds that bath springing up out of the London clay below on the spot with perfect regularity. The proximity of St. Clement's Well, however, no doubt gave its name to Holywell-street.

Sporting Baboos.—Writing of his prowess in the hunting-field, a native paper remarks that "Baboo Hurree Chund Rai is a first-rate sportsman, who would do honour to a British Nimrod." Perhaps (the *Globe* observes) this growing taste for sport among effeminate Bengalees is the most noteworthy instance of the spread of European manners and customs in the East. In other directions marvellous changes have been silently effected during the last fifteen or twenty years. Educated native gentlemen, having learnt that acquisition of wealth and gratification of self do not form the highest purposes of existence, now interest themselves in the well-being of their poorer countrymen. In some exceptional cases the introduction of European civilisation can hardly be considered an improvement on established customs. A young Baboo, dressed in shining broadcloth, patent leather boots, and embroidered smoking cap, is an incongruous object by the banks of holy Gunga Jee. While there is no positive harm in this change of fashion, it is impossible to help regretting the substitution of stiff cloth for flowing muslin. The proneness of young Baboos to covertly feast on sacred beef-steak and forbidden bottled beer seems to indicate that the Hindoo faith has lost its vitality. Since this decay was necessary before the introduction of Christianity these revels may be productive of ultimate good.

The Russian Imperial Family.—The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* says: "A few days ago the betrothal of the grand Duke Vladimir, third son of the Emperor of Russia, with the Duchess Maria Alexandrina Elizabeth Eleanore, eldest daughter of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, was proclaimed at the Russian Court. The occasion is marked by the Grand Duchess being the first foreign Princess marrying into the Russian reigning family who, since the exception granted in favour of Charlotte Sophia of Brunswick, the daughter-in-law of Peter the Great, is permitted to retain her religion. Both *fiancés* are, on the mother's side, descendants of Rurik, the Scandinavian Chief who created the Russian Empire a thousand years ago. The bride elect has the additional advantage of being descended on the father's side from the Grand Ducal family of Mecklenburg, the only dynasty of Slavonian origin reigning in the male line. As her mother was a Princess of Reuss, she is the niece of the well-known diplomatist of the same name representing Germany at the St. Petersburg Court. The marriage will probably be solemnised in July, shortly before the return of the Russian Emperor to his capital.

Bachelor Tax.—Camillus, the Roman Dictator, made bachelors marry the widows of those killed in battle. Something of the sort is considered very desirable in France at the present moment, but as the widows of the last war were few, another idea for making bachelorhood hateful has been started in the old form of a bachelor tax. The writer of a pamphlet—which is of course dedicated to "the ladies"—estimates that this impost would produce enough to permit the abolition of all other taxes! From twenty-one to twenty-five years of age, bachelors should pay one-twentieth of their income; from 23 to 30, one-tenth; from 30 to 40, one-fifth; and from 60 to 79, one-tenth. Beyond this age the writer leaves the bachelor free. This assessment, he calculates, would bring in 580 millions of francs per annum, a part of which might be devoted to giving *dots* to poor marriageable young ladies, and the remainder spent in abolishing other taxes of a less obnoxious nature.

The Boston Sugar Brig.—The Boston iron brig Novelty recently foundered at sea while on a voyage between the West Indies and Boston. She was a vessel of peculiar construction, built about five years ago expressly for the sugar trade, being fitted with tanks into which the liquid sugar was pumped, instead of being packed in hogsheads, as is usually the case. She thus carried a much larger cargo than a vessel of equal tonnage otherwise laden, and earned for her owners many thousand of dollars more than had she not been built on the tank principle. She averaged six trips a season, and the enterprise was regarded as highly successful until she sprang a leak and foundered. Her sea-going qualities were excellent, and as she had never leaked previously to the voyage on which she was lost, her owners say the cause of the disaster was that at some time a portion of the liquid has overflowed the tanks, and running down to the bottom of the tank, where it was inaccessible, the acid has gradually eaten through the iron plating and caused the leak. They think this principle of stowage for sugar cargoes has been successfully demonstrated, and will, therefore, construct another vessel on the tank system for that trade. The hull, however, is to be of wood, and not of iron.

The Private Inquiry Office Nuisance.—Is it a good sign of the times, asks a London correspondent, that every day a new, "private inquiry office" springs into existence? Not only is this the case, but the respectable firms engaged in the eminently respectable business of private inquiry are becoming so eager for custom that they have taken to issuing private circulars, as well as publishing advertisements in the papers. They select for the most polite importunity gentlemen for example who announce that they will not for the future be responsible for the debts of their wives.

The Fair Sex Taking the Upper Hand.—A correspondent of the *New York Tribune* had, he explains, been led by a perusal of Dr. Clarke's work on "Sex in Education," to the conclusion that all his countrywomen, having one foot in the grave, are a peaceful and harmless race. He has, however, altered his opinion since a visit to a charita *matinée*, where the valour and determination with which the fair sex appropriated the reserve seats taken by the other sex, effectually undeceived him. Hopeless of securing a place, although he had paid for one, he complained to a policeman of the conduct of the ladies. "It's precious few men can face them," said the official; "I can't, but I saw one at the Lyceum who did, and I just asked him for his card. This gentleman had two seats in the balcony, and when he succeeded in getting there, he found the seats occupied by two ladies. 'Have you any checks for these seats?' asked the usher. 'No,' they indignantly replied. 'Then the seats belong to this gentleman?' 'If he's a gentleman, he won't ask for them; we shall keep them,' was the ladies' sweet reply." The gentleman being, as the policeman suggested, endowed with exceptional courage, eventually obtained his rights, but it appears that, as another sufferer remarked, the stalwart youth of American cities will, in general, do well never to trust themselves at *matinées* without the protection of a lady.

A Live Fish in the Throat.—A letter from Madras in the *Medical Times and Gazette* has the following: One morning, word was brought to Dr. Paul that a man had come to the hospital with a live fish in his throat. Accordingly there was a general move to the verandah, where we saw a coolie, aged about twenty, walking in, supported by a man on either side, breathing with intense difficulty, and in great distress. The story was soon told. He was that morning employed in emptying a tank and in catching the fish that were left floundering when the water was drawn off. In his eagerness he had one under each foot, one in each hand, and, to make sure of a fifth, he tried to secure one by taking its head between his front teeth; but the fish was too quick for him, and wriggling sitelf free from the teeth, made its way into the pharynx. A fish of the same sort and size was produced; it was like a perch, about four inches long, with a most formidable dorsal fin, the spines of which, when erected by being pushed the wrong way, stood out at least an inch. A finger passed into the throat easily felt the fish. Here was a very pretty case!—but as the first point was to enable the man to breathe, in less time than it takes me to write it, a bed was brought out into the verandah, and he was laid upon it and tracheotomised. Then, what was to be done? Pull the fish out! any one would say; but although it was easy to seize the tail, there was the erect spines of the fins, which would have lacerated the parts past recovery had the fruitless attempt been made. Then it was suggested to push the fish down into the stomach; but alas! it lay doubled up with its head to the left, and this could not be done. Then, when this was ascertained, it was hoped that the head might be turned upwards with a blunt hook, and so be dragged out. But the fish would not move. So it was necessary to leave the patient for a few hours—he was breathing freely, and nourished with beef-tea enemata. Next morning it was found that the fish had become decomposed, and was easily broken up into a putrid pulp, some of which made its way into the trachea, whilst the spines offered the greatest obstacle to any removal by the mouth. In order to afford room for clearing the throat, the wound made in the tracheotomy was enlarged upwards through the junction of the alæ of the thyroid; but the patient was very exhausted, and died before relief could be given. I believe this accident is pretty well known amongst fishing communities, and that there is a preparation in the museum of one of the Scottish Universities showing a pharynx with the fish impacted. A short time afterwards, the history of just such a case was related in the Indian newspapers as having occurred in Ceylon. It is said that the fish was allowed to putrify in the pharynx, whence it was ejected piecemeal next day, and that the patient recovered. But in order that such a policy may be successful, the patient must be provided with means of breathing, and the fish should have no spines.

Counterfeit Butter.—New York is seldom without its disclosures of some kind or another. The latest novelty in this direction is the discovery of a company that has been in operation for several months, and whose business has been to bribe "merchants of good repute" dealing in butter to accept for sale a spurious compound known as "oleomargarine," and composed of animal fat, suet, milk, and oil. The exposures of the doings of this company have, according to the *Journal of Commerce* placed the entire butter trade of New York in jeopardy. Manufactories of the counterfeit butter are in operation in Brooklyn, New York, Jersey City, Hoboken, and Boston. Seeing that the fat of dead horses and other kinds of offal are introduced it is not surprising to hear that the "butter" can be made at fourteen cents per pound, and that the profits on its sale are considerable. It is said that a large quantity of the stuff found its way last autumn on board vessels bound for Europe, and it is added significantly that the captains of these vessels are now looking for the men who sold it to them for the purpose of inflicting personal chastisement.

An Umbrella Betting Office.—In the Court of Common Pleas, London, the case of Bows *v.* Fenwick came up before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge and Justices Brett and Denman. This was a case stated on appeal from the decision of the Justices of Chester convicting the appellant of occupying a place and using it for the purpose of betting. The question turned on the meaning of the word "place" in the Act for the suppression of betting-houses, 16th and 17th Victoria, chapter 119. It appeared that on the 14th of July, the appellant was on the Roodee or racecourse at Chester, standing on a stool 2ft. 6in. high, over which was a large umbrella similar to a carriage umbrella, capable of covering several persons, the stick being made in six joints like that of a sweep's brush, so as to be taken into pieces and fixed in the ground with a spike. The umbrella when opened was six feet high; it was a showery day, but it was kept open wet or dry. On the umbrella was painted in large letters, "G. Bows, Victoria Club, Leeds." There was also a card exhibited. On it were the words, "We pay all bets first past the post." The appellant was seen to make several bets. The question was, whether the stool and umbrella constituted a "place" within the meaning of the Act. The Court affirmed the conviction. The words of the Act were "house, office, room, or other place." If the appellant's stool and umbrella came within this definition, they were undoubtedly used for purposes forbidden by the Act. The spot was ascertained for the time by the spike of the umbrella being put in the ground, and was certainly a place—possibly an office. It was within the mischief and the terms of the Act. What the Legislature meant to prohibit was persons having a fixed place to which the unwary might resort. The umbrella, which was capable of covering several persons, was practically an open tent. The words "we pay here all bets first past the post" was "if you will resort or come under this umbrella, here is a place where you will be paid."

White Coal.—A material called white coal, consisting of felted vegetable fibres like peat, has recently been discovered in Australia. It burns easily with a light flame. Large tracts are overlaid with this deposit; it requires no mining, and is already used in large quantities for fuel.

The Japanese Peasant and his Rabbits.—Genteel poverty (according to the *Globe*) might find extremely remunerative employment in rearing rabbits for the Japanese market. Lately a perfect mania for these rodents has broken out in Japan, similar to the tulip *furore* which formerly reduced Holland to the verge of insolvency. Steamers from San Francisco are laden deep with live rabbits, for which the Japanese pay almost any price. Lately 1200 dollars were actually given for a single rabbit before it was landed from the ship. The extent which this extraordinary mania has already reached is proved by an instance lately chronicled in the California press. A poor man, seized with the prevailing insanity, submitted to semi-starvation until he had saved enough for the purchase of two rabbits. These have unfortunately died, their owner lost his few remaining senses, until his daughter hit upon the happy expedient of selling herself into servitude, in order to provide money for the purchase of another pair. Having in this way exchanged his daughter for a couple of rabbits, the Japanese peasant was happy, until they also died. Then having no more children to barter away, the bereaved man killed himself, while his daughter, unable to sell herself a second time, followed his example. Bearing these facts in mind, rabbit rearing would seem to be exactly the sort of employment required by needy gentility. The work is light, interesting, and not too severely intellectual, while the prices now paid in Japan must be extremely remunerative. The only doubt is whether this occupation would be considered sufficiently genteel.

Electric Cables.—As it is probably less than 25 years since the first electric cable was laid, one is naturally struck with the very rapid progress which has been made in this department of telegraphy. Almost the first, if not the very first, cables that were submerged were those of the late Electric and International Telegraph Company between Orfordness and Scheveningen, generally known as the Hague Cables. This was about the year 1850, soon after the incorporation of the company, and several of these cables are still in existence, and doing duty in different forms throughout the United Kingdom. Originally they were single-wire cables, but having been superseded by others of greater capacity, and carried by a different route, they were fished up, twisted together so as to make four and seven wire cables, and laid down—one from the coast of Scotland to the north of Ireland, and another across the Frith of Forth from Granton to Burntisland. The greater portion of the last mentioned cable has been recently recovered, and it may be interesting to state, as bearing upon the important question of the "life" of a cable, that its condition was found to be comparatively good.

A Live Beetle in Solid Wood.—The *Furniture Gazette* is responsible for the following account of a live beetle imbedded in solid wood. It appears that a workman in the employ of Mr. Rowney, of Oxford-street, was recently slitting a pear log with the circular saw. After removing a few pieces, a small hole was seen in the centre of the log, and in it a beetle, which soon began to move about when released from its cell. The tree was felled some years since. Mr. Rowney has had the piece of wood containing the cell cut out, and intends to preserve that and the beetle. The vitality possessed by this insect must be something astonishing; but in the absence of any information as to the species, it is impossible to say whether it is a curiosity amongst its fellows. If the wood came from America, the beetle is possibly a "borer," which, neglecting to leave the tree at the proper time, has entered the perfect stage after the rising sap had cut off its retreat, and has become imbedded in wood. This story has the advantage of those of the live toads in solid rocks; for we presume Mr. Rowney will submit his octogenarian beetle to the scrutiny of the *savants*.

Dinner Service for the King of Siam.—A service of silver plate was on view at the establishment of Messrs. Elkington and Co., St. Ann's-square, Manchester, which exemplifies in a high degree the great perfection in taste, design, and workmanship, to which the art of the silversmith is carried. It is a State dinner service, made to order, for the King of Siam, and it is in every respect well fitted to grace a Royal table. It is of solid silver throughout, and consists of a large number of pieces, being intended to dine about sixty persons in State. Conspicuous among the others is the principal centre-piece, a splendid and massive piece of workmanship, nearly 4 feet high, and the design is that of a three-headed elephant—a symbol of the Siamese religion—standing upon a plateau, and bearing on its back a double vase with a tower-shaped stem. The trappings of the elephant are of delicate gold work, and gold tassels depend from the ears. Though the idea of gracefulness in conjunction with a three-headed monster might seem rather difficult to conceive, the heads are so arranged as to detract in no degree from the appearance of the figure. Standing in front, just under the heads, are two keepers in martial attire, each with a long staff, from the top of which projects the national flag of Siam. This piece, which weighs 700 ounces, bears in three places the coat of arms of the King, in high relief, and richly moulded and chased. There are 14 other centre pieces of smaller size, but all of the same design as the principal one. The design is Oriental, and the elephant, single-headed as well as three-headed, figures largely in it; an elephant with one head forming the handle of each of the dish, tureen, and other covers. Every piece has also carved upon it the King's coat of arms and his name in a monogram. The whole service, which weighs 15,000 ounces, costs £10,000, and is wrought and chased in the highest style of art.

Gustave Doré's "Martyrs in the Circus."—A Paris correspondent has the following in a description of the French Academy's Exibition: In the room to the right there is a wonderfully striking picture by Gustave Doré, "Martyrs in the Circus at Rome." It is evening; the lions and tigers have done their work; over a heap of bodies in the centre, under whose limbs and garments blood is still oozing out, wild beasts are crouching, tearing the reeking limbs with tooth and claw; above, the stars shine bright in the deep blue of an Italian sky; and between the bloodstained arena of the circus, above the empty seats of the amphitheatre, there is a suggestion of diaphanous-winged forms of angels, whose unseen presence even the *feræ naturæ* seem to feel. That is the general impression created by the picture, one of the grandest I ever saw. I am no great admirer of M. Doré as a painter, but this effort of his is a work of genius.

Privations of an Australian Exploring Party.—The arrival of Colonel Warburton and his exploring party at the northern boundary of Western Australia, after having worked their way right across the continent, was lately telegraphed. The party endured great hardships, having had to subsist on roots and wild fruit for many weeks, and were so reduced by privation and exposure as at one time to be unable to crawl more than a mile a day. Timely succour reached them, however, provisions having been sent on months previously to a station far advanced in the interior, at which it was thought possible the party might emerge. They were very cordially received at Adelaide. The *Anglo-Brazilian Times* of the 8th ult. has the following: An exploring party, consisting of Colonel José Calixto Furtado, his Belgian son-in-law, Albert Blochouse, and three slaves, set out last February for the head waters of the Capim, a tributary of the Guama, in Pará, where rumour placed very rich gold washings. At the Indian Mission Brother Candido de Hermerence joined the expedition with sixteen of the Indians there, instructed since boyhood. But some days later, during one of the night rests on shore, the Indians shot the missionary, the Belgian, and the slaves. The affair was made known at the Mission by the return of one of the Indians, who appeared strutting proudly in the murdered friar's robe, and who was followed later by the rest.

Artificial Flower-Making.—There is something gay and youthful in the name of florist, and nothing can exceed the beautiful productions which come from their hands; they rival those of our gardens in freshness and brilliancy. This is especially a trade of Paris; beautiful women of both hemispheres there procure the flowers with which to wreathe their hair. Italy once held the first rank for artificial flowers, as it did for silks, lace, and mirrors; then Lyons succeeded to Italy; now the Parisian flora are without a rival. Nearly six thousand work women live on this manufacture in that city alone. The most skilful are real artists, who study natural flowers with a love for them, and reproduce them with more fidelity than the best painters. Their wages will amount to half-a-crown a day; whilst the inferior ones do not make more than twenty-pence, even when working eleven hours. A florist may live upon this if she do not indulge in the fancy of wearing her own own wreaths and going to balls.

THE TREASURE HUNTERS;

OR,

The Search for the Mountain Mine.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

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OUTLINE OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

In Chapter I. we are introduced to Frank Adams, an English yeoman farmer, and his servant, Larry Carey, a quaint-looking Irishman, as they converse together about taking their speedy departure from the Californian town, in which, along with Frank's wife and sister, they have recently arrived. While thus employed they are accosted by a stranger, who gives his name as Caleb Dawson, State of Virginia, and who forces himself upon Adams's company after astonishing the latter by telling him that he knows he is a British farmer who, having failed at home, has come abroad to make a pile. Chapter II. describes how Dawson, finding Larry seated outside the hotel in the sun, succeeds in drawing out of him, by the aid of sundry glasses of whisky, the reason of his engaging to accompany Frank Adams to California. Chapter III. gives an account of the dangers to which Mrs. Adams and Mary were exposed when they wandered unawares right into the wildest part of the city, and from which they were providentially rescued by the exertions of Dawson and Adams. In Chapter IV. we have "the thravels of Larry Carey, gintleman," through the Chinese quarter of San Francisco, and his happy arrival just in time to take a telling part in the fray with the gang of cut-throats in which his master and the ubiquitous Yankee were engaged. Chapter V. opens to the sound of the crack of Larry's stick as he clears the way and scatters the "spalpeens." When the villains were beaten off, some alarm was caused by the disappearance of Mrs. Adams and Mary from the house in which they were supposed to have taken refuge; but they were found all safe, though flurried enough, at the Chesapeake Hotel. Chapter VI. opens with expressions of gratitude all round to Dawson for his timely aid, and that smart adventurer from the state of Virginia, availing himself of the more cordial footing he had now obtained in the Adams' circle, strongly advised the Britisher to give up his farming nostrums, and to join him in an expedition to a region among the mountains, where he had definite information that the silver cropped out of the rocks in great veins and blocks. With some reluctance at first, but cordially enough at last, Adams agreed to act on Dawson's suggestion, and the two entered into a compact. Just when they had reached this interesting point in the conversation Caleb became aware that some person, perhaps one of the scoundrels with whom they were lately in contact, had been eaves-dropping, and speedy steps were taken to discover who the spy was. The rasping of a gimlet boring a hole through a door directed them to the proper quarter, and just while they were waiting their opportunity to pounce out upon the prying knave, his head was suddenly dashed through the panel by some one who had attacked him from behind.

CHAPTER VII.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

Now it happened that while Frank Adams and his companion had been congratulating themselves upon their escape, and making a compact, those with whom they had come in contact had been making a compact of their own. Heavy blows had been struck, a jaw broken, and wounds given; these latter of a trifling nature, but sufficient to raise in men such a desire for revenge that the givers were marked down, and, though ignorant of the terrible fact, their lives were, in certain quarters of the place, not worth many minutes' purchase.

What was more then, every step had been tracked until they had entered the hotel. Some little time after, a man, whom one of his fellow-citizens would have spoken of as "a very ornery cuss," slowly dawdled into the bar, called for a cigar and a drink, and then went slouching about, behaving much after the fashion of a digger, who had made a pile of gold, and had now come to knock it down.

Such visitors were too common to excite comment, and, after a drink or two more, the new arrival was wandering about the Frisco caravanserai as much at home as any other stranger.

Apparently looking for nothing but his own enjoyment, he was soon after to have been seen, if any one had watched him, slouching along the passage upon which the door of Frank Adams's room opened, and here, as if quite by accident, he stopped short, took a great knife from his pocket, which knife opened out a whole armoury of implements, from a toothpick to a corkscrew, and, having set the gimlet, began boring softly, evidently from a desire to see whether the wood was hard or soft.

He was not a pleasant-looking ruffian, and a discolouration upon one side of his face did not improve his personal appearance; but that was nobody's business but his own, and he kept on boring away very softly, stopping at intervals with his ear close to the panel.

Then he stopped, listened attentively, and the murmur of conversation seemed to have for him a most gratifying effect, for he paused from his work again and again, before taking it up to proceed with anything like perseverance.

In an ordinary way, to have pierced the thin panel would have been the work of a few seconds; but our friend seemed to enjoy making it a task of many minutes, with rests and refreshings between, as he listened and listened again.

Now about this time Mr. Larry Carey, who had been busy doing nothing, thought he would seek the master and ask for orders.

Larry stepped along jauntilly, and whistled "Limerick Races," for he was in capital spirits: that scrummage, as he termed it, had warmed his heart, and made him think of old days.

"Ah," he said, "the place is the laste taste better thin I thought for; and it's likely enough I'll get reconciled to it in time, but—— Whoo! what's that?"

He drew back suddenly into an open room, for he had caught sight of the American gentleman busy at work upon the panel of his master's door.

For a moment or two he could hardly believe it; then his mind failed to realise the object; but when he saw the scoundrel's ear placed against the door he read it at once.

A broad grin overspread his features, and dancing back into the room on tip-toe, he moistened his hand, took a fresh grip of his stick, and gave it a triumphant flourish round his head.

After this he drew a long breath, went softly to the door, peeped cautiously round the side, and saw the fellow still turning the gimlet, but now in a reverse way, and the minute after he was stooping down low, with his eye to the aperture he had made.

"Och, bud this is heavenly!" sighed Larry, whose face wore an aspect that seemed to say it had been bathed in bliss; and slipping off his boots he went quickly on tip-toe down the passage, and with a kick and a blow, delivered simultaneously, he drove the fellow's head right through the frail panel as we have seen.

"What d'ye mane, ye dirty avesdropping staler of people's words, eh?" exclaimed Larry; and he raised his stick for another blow, but with a desperate effort the pilloried man dragged his head out of the fractured woodwork, and darted to the other side of the table, where in an instant he had drawn a revolver, and presented it at Dawson; but as he drew the trigger Larry's stick went whizzing through the air and struck him full on the arm, destroyed his aim, and the ball went crashing through the partition into the next room.

At the same moment Dawson and Adams sprang forward to seize the scoundrel, but they were tco late; with a yell of defiance he dashed to the window, swung himself out, and dropped to the side walk—only a matter of a few feet—and was gone.

"That's well rid of him, your honour," said Larry, picking up his stick, which he cuddled affectionately to his side; "I think he had rather the worst of the bargain."

DARWINIAN COLLOQUY.

He looked from one to the other, but no one spoke except a waiter and two or three stayers in the hotel, who had been attracted by the noise—rather a common one there, and not always noticed; but finding all was right, they departed.

"I ought to have known better, Adams," said Dawson, who had begun pacing the room with hasty strides. "To think that I should go shouting out my projects for every listener to hear. Well, it is too late now."

"But you mentioned no names of places even if the fellow did hear," said Adams.

"What of that? If it is as I fear, they will watch us. I feel sure that was one of the rowdies we fought."

"Bedad, an' so it was, sor. I thought I knowed him before. Here stop a minute."

Larry ran to the window, but came back directly rubbing his ear.

"Sure he's gone. Out of sight intirely he is, or I could have told him at wanst; for if it was the man I mane, I put my mark on him wid my stick, when we came together down below there, hours ago."

"He had a mark upon his face; I saw it myself," said Adams.

"Had he, now?" said Larry. "Then it was mine, and no doubt of it. An' now he's got one on the back of his head; good luck to him! and I hope he likes it."

"It's very, very unlucky," said Dawson, shaking his head. "I'm afraid he heard too much."

"Heard too much, your honour!" said Larry. "Why, if his head had been full as an egg, that tap I give him would have driven it all out, and his sinses with it."

"The sooner we get away from here the better," said Dawson, after a few moments' thought.

"I'm glad of it," muttered Larry.

"I'll push on all the preparations I can," said Dawson, "and you must clear off what you have, and be ready for a start at any time. And now, another thing, Adams—those women must never leave the place without one of us with them; and I warn you that even then it will be dangerous."

"Are you not magnifying the peril?" said Adams.

"I hope I am," was the reply; "but I fear not. I know this place better than you, and I shall not feel at rest until we have left it fifty miles behind."

A short consultation followed, and then each went to execute the plans decided upon, though little could be done, owing to the lateness of the evening. Still there was something in their future course being decided upon, and the next day Adams had contrived to dispose of the tools and farm seeds he had brought over to a brother emigrant, and, under Dawson's advice, made such purchases as were deemed necessary for the expedition. There was Dawson's paraphernalia too to inspect, Larry looking on with a puzzled air, and caressing his chin with one hand, it not being considered desirable to initiate him in the plans that had been decided upon.

Dawson had already bought mules and a tent with various other camping-out arrangements; and under his guidance Adams was soon equipped.

"It would be as well for Larry here to have a revolver and rifle," said Dawson, as they went over their list of necessaries.

"An' is it me ye want to have one of the murderin' tools," said that worthy. "Sure I'd be shootin' meself dead and somebody else half-a-dozen times a day. What would I want wid a rifle when I've got this?" and he flourished his stick.

"I don't know that I am doing right in going," Adams said; "I'm afraid those poor women will feel the journey very much."

"I'll guarantee that it shall be less toilsome than the one you intended," said Dawson; and then they returned to the hotel.

For their arrangements were now all made; and, with a couple of hours' preparation, they could at any time set forth on their journey, as there was nothing to do but load the mules, saddle up and go, the mules and stores being in a stable about a couple of hundred yards from the hotel, all goings and comings having been conducted with the greatest secrecy. When they went they did so one at a time, and by different routes, meeting at the stables, where Dawson's follower, a tall half breed, who had been accustomed to mules from childhood, always stayed in charge of the animals and the burdens they were to carry.

But, in spite of all their care, three days had elapsed before they could think of making a start, during which the intimacy between Dawson and the English family had ripened into a warm friendship, though Mary was always quiet and distant—almost cold.

"I'm thinkin'," said Larry, on the fourth morning, "that there's some divil's game on the way."

"Why? What make's you think that?" said Adams, eagerly.

"Why, sor, that illigint boy that I caught listening is always hanging about on the watch."

"But you have been careful. He has not seen you round by the stables?"

"No, yer honour. I dodged him, and took him down among the Chinese one time, and up the town another time; for I could see by the twisht of his eye he was a spying of me. But, yer honour, d'ye think that black boy of yours, Ike, is to be thrusted?"

"He's true as steel, Larry," said Dawson, laughing.

"Bud, yer honour, ye sometimes cut yourself wid your own piece of steel."

"You doubt him then, Larry?"

"Oh no," said Larry, "divil doubt him a bit; only suppose he was to pison the mules, or sell 'em to the inimy?"

"No fear, Larry, but out with it; you don't like the lad?"

"Ah," said Larry, "I don't mind him at all; only whiniver he sees me he rowls his eyes about, and it's a bad sign."

"A bad sign—and why?"

"Ye should niver thrust anything that rowls his eyes," said Larry." "We had an owld cow out there at home as used to rowl her eyes horrible, and whiniver she rowled her eyes she kicked."

"Come now, Larry," said Dawson, laughing, "own it like a man you don't like Ikey, and you're a bit jealous of him."

"And is it jealous of a poor haythen as is half black? Misther Dawson, sir, I'm ashamed of you."

Larry was so indignant that he got up and walked away, while Dawson sat and laughed heartily for a few moments.

"Look here, Adams," he said, "the comical part of the affair is that Ike came to me only this morning, and, in a most mysterious way warned me against poor Larry, assuring me that he would sell us all for a few dollars. Those two fellows hate one another consumedly, and we shall have to rule them with a rod of iron to keep them in order. But look there!"

They were sitting smoking near the open window, and both involuntarily drew back, for on the far sidewalk they saw, slouching along, two men whom they at once recognised as of the party with whom they had had the fight. The men stared very hard at the houses as they went by, and their coming seemed to have a depressing effect upon the two adventurers.

"They are watching us, I'm afraid," said Dawson, after a pause; "and I think the sooner we arrange to go the better. I did mean to wait to-morrow over, but, depend upon it, we ought to be off to-night."

"To-night!" said Adams. "Well, perhaps so; but they would most likely get to know from the hotel people."

"Then we will not tell the hotel people. We can leave what we consider fair payment, and a note saying that your boxes are to be kept in the store till your return. Then, when all is quiet, say at one o'clock, we can get round to the stables, or, better still, meet out on the road."

"Very easy, if we are not watched," said Adams; "but if we are?"

"Try and throw them off the scent," was the reply.

Then the arrangements were once more gone over, the plan decided upon, and Dawson went off to where the mules were kept, while Adams prepared his people for the coming journey.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ESCAPE.

The night came on dark and oppressive, and, as if because the adventurers wished to go off at a certain time, the dwellers at the hotel seemed to be unusually late. Adams sat with open window, listening impatiently, and longing for the last light to be extinguished.

The plans were that Dawson and his half breed were to start with their little mule train about twelve, go by a circuitous route out of the city, and wait at a spot, previously picked out, about two miles on the road. Here they were to be joined by Adams, his wife, and sister, and Larry—a simple enough plan if it would work; but the best-laid plans sometimes fail.

Dawson had been very anxious to stay and help the party leaving the hotel; but it was of such vital consequence that the mules and stores should all be in time, that he was reluctantly compelled to give up; and he parted from them that evening to join his aid, with spirits depressed and burdened more than he cared to own.

"You look dull, man," said Adams, cheerily, as they parted.

"Sense of responsibility, that's all, old fellow," he replied. "You'll be careful though, and look out to see that you are not watched. All depends upon our getting well away I reckon. Then they may do their worst; that is, if we really are marked down by those scoundrels."

Then he set off, and Adams sat watching and waiting for the time.

In about an hour he was joined by his wife and Mary, the former shivering with apprehension, but outwardly very brave; the latter calm, quiet, and self-contained. They were dressed for their journey, and, like two brave women, had no impediments, but a little valise slung over the shoulder, and a thick warm shawl carefully folded tightly, and also slung by a strap.

Their lights had been long extinguished, and they sat silently in one corner of the room, hand clasped in hand, while Adams divided his attention between the window and the door.

Twice over he fancied that he heard footsteps coming lightly along the wide corridor, but they had no existence then, as all became silent in the place; a creaking board would set all hearts beating, or the sighing of the night wind be interpreted into the whispers of conspirators against their plans. The window, though left purposely open, took up most of Adams's attention, for it was from the street that he apprehended danger.

Gazing cautiously out, he again and again fancied that one of the passers-by was a spy, and at such times it seemed to him that their plans had been badly laid, and that they were evidently known to their enemies.

Then, as the man he had marked down resolved himself into some idler taking a final cigar before retiring for the night, he laughed at his fears, and told himself that they were all invention—that the scoundrels they had encountered had troubled themselves no more; and that all they had to do was to quietly walk out of the place, join their friend, and away to the mountains.

By touching the face of his watch now and then, he could tell how the time progressed, and he wondered that it should be so slow. Then he crossed the room to whisper a few words of comfort to the women, before once more going to the window, cautiously peering out, and trying to pierce the gloom.

Danger at last; there was no doubt of it now, for just below where he stood were a couple of men whispering together; then one glided away, and the other seemed to take a few steps to the right, but whether he went away or not Adams could not tell.

He stood listening for some time, and then came away, for all remained silent, and he prepared to descend alone first to see if the way was clear, for the time for starting had arrived.

Larry was lying at full length upon the floor waiting for his orders, and talking to himself softly so as to keep awake. At a touch he was sitting up, and on receiving his orders stepped softly to the window to watch while his master went below.

Adams was not long in reaching the door, where he stood listening for awhile, but all was silent--apparently so—and he was about to raise his hand to the fastenings, when there was a slight cough and a faint rustling sound without, as if somebody seated there had just changed his position.

Adams turned cold, for here was corroborative evidence that his fears were not without foundation. He listened again, and now he could make out the heavy breathing of the person watching, so he stepped lightly back, asking himself how he was to act.

He regained his room as cautiously as he had descended, and, refraining from saying anything to alarm the women, went to Larry's side; for he felt something must be done; they could not give up now that they had gone so far. They were really watched, and they must avoid the spies by some means or another.

He told Larry the state of affairs.

"Ah, then I'll go and give him a tap on the head," he said, coolly.

"And alarm the whole place," said Adams, peevishly.

"Thin we must go some other way," said Larry. "Oh no, look here, yer honour, I'll go out of the door and tumble over the dirty ruffian; thin he'll be up and afther me, and I'll lade him a dance half over the town, while you and the ladies go off. Sure and I'll join ye as soon as I can."

"Won't do, Larry; we can't leave you behind."

"Lave me behind! That you just wont, for I'll be afther ye in two twos."

"My dear fellow," said Adams, "you have no idea of the country. If we parted, the chances are that we should never meet again."

"Oh, go along," said Larry; "it ain't so big as all that, anyhow. Well, thin, look here, yer honour, how will you do it?"

"I can see no way at present. The door is watched."

"Thin we'll go out of the windy," said Larry.

"But the window is not five yards from the door."

"He talks as if there was only one windy in the whole house. Come along, and thry the one in the impty room at the ind of the passage;

sure it isn't more thin tin feet from the ground."

The proposal was too good to be slighted, and after Larry had been first, to see that the way was clear, and the room really empty, the party made their way cautiously there; and they stood together in the dark, while the way to descend was discussed.

As Larry had said, it was not above ten feet to the ground, and, fortunately for the fugitives, the hotel was at a corner, and this window looked out into a narrow way running at right angles to the street. They could then lower themselves down without much risk of the watcher in the doorway hearing their movements.

The plans were soon made: Larry was to descend first, and be ready to take the women in his strong arms, while Adams lowered them, the distance robbing the descent of all ideas of danger.

All was silent below, and as black as ink; so after a few more whispered words of direction, Larry climbed out quickly, for the time was going fast, lowered himself softly down, hung for a moment by his hands, and dropped.

"All right, yer honour," he whispered, after creeping to the corner and looking towards the doorway.

Then came the task to lower Mary, who, however, was strong and active enough to render no light assistance herself, and, after a little rustling of dresses, and the heavy panting of breath, she was hanging from the window, held by the wrists by her brother, Larry taking her in his arms, and she too was safe.

"Now, yer honour," whispered Larry.

Adams's response was to catch his trembling little wife in his arms, lift her gently out, and he was then about to lower her down when she arrested him by whispering—

"Listen! Did you not hear something?"

Adams stopped for a moment, but only to give an impatient denial. Then, lowering his light burden gently, he let her swing into Larry's arms, and was preparing to descend, when he heard a hasty ejaculation from below. Then there was silence, only broken by the sound of approaching footsteps.

Adams remained where he was, knowing by the silence below that the companions of his flight were crouching up against the wall, so as to avoid notice; and that if he attempted to join them it would only be to betray their whereabouts.

It was an anxious time, and he seemed almost to hear the beating of the hearts below as he leaned out trying to strain his sight, so as to catch a glimpse of the coming danger. One moment he was regretting that he had not joined them; the next he felt that it was quite right that he had stayed, knowing as he did that he could rejoin them in an instant.

It seemed long, but it was only a few seconds before the steps came nearer and nearer. There was a low whispering, and then a voice cried, "Come on; here they are!"

The words were accompanied by a sharp crack and a groan—plain evidence that Larry's stick had come into play. Then with a rapid movement, and grasping a heavy stick in one hand, Adams lowered himself down to be seized on the instant in a muscular grip which, taking him as it did at a disadvantage, called for all his powers to keep himself from being taken prisoner.

"Don't shoot, boys," a voice said in a low husky growl. "Curse that Irishman!"

In the darkness it was hard to tell friend from foe; but while Adams was engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with two ruffians, Larry was keeping two more at bay, and covering the retreat of the women; but only to find to his dismay that he was in a blind alley, and that the only way of escape was by the front.

"Then you stop here, me darlin's," he said in a low whisper. "I'll soon make a way for the masther to come down to us."

Larry was as good as his word, for, assuming the aggressive, he drove back his assailants step by step till he was by the side of Adams and then the two men felt a kind of chill of despair come upon them, knowing, as they did, that they must be overcome.

So far, Adams had been handling a stick, the feeling being evidently the same on both sides, that it would be unwise to fire, when suddenly one of the ruffians, who had had his head laid open by a blow from Larry's stick, drew his revolver and fired twice in rapid succession, but without either shot taking effect.

As if in answer to the shots there came the sound of feet, and a voice exclaimed, "Are you there, Adams?"

"Yes; help, quick!" was the reply, followed by a cheer and a dash, well supported by an attack made by Larry and his master, with the result that the ruffians, finding themselves taken in front and rear, hesitated for a moment, and then turned and fled.

"Now, quick!" exclaimed Adams, "we have not a moment to lose."

"No; they'll be back directly," replied Dawson, for it was he; and each taking the hand of one of the trembling women, and closely followed by Larry, the fugitives escaped from the narrow lane, and hurried in the direction they believed to be opposite to the one taken by their enemies.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE MARCH.

It was a close shave, for as Larry turned the corner of the last street and looked back towards the hotel, he heard pattering feet, when, gripping his stick more tightly, he shook it in that direction, muttering ——

"Wait a bit, me friends. I'll have another thry at ye some day."

He waited for a few moments to make sure of the direction the pursuers meant to take, and then ran on after his own party, checking them and drawing them aside into a narrow entry, where as they waited they heard the ruffians reach the street end, where they paused for a moment or two before passing on.

"They'd have been down on us like a stick," said Larry; "bud it's all right now. On wid ye, Misther Dawson. Eh? Take care of you, Miss Mary! An' ov course so I will," he added, as Mary came to his side and placed her arm in his, while without showing any annoyance, Dawson led on.

"I got the mules well on the way," he said in a low tone to Adams, as they hurried along, pausing at intervals to listen whether they were pursued; "and then I couldn't feel satisfied without coming back. I was afraid you might miss the way."

"It's a good thing you did come back," said Adams; "and thank goodness we shall soon be out of the place. Ill luck seems to have waited on us."

"And good luck too in giving us friends," said Mrs. Adams, warmly.

"I'd not forgotten that, though I did not speak," said Adams.

"Well," said Dawson, "we won't congratulate ourselves till we are out of the wood. Keep on quickly, please, for those scoundrels may at any time turn up; and I'm not like your friend, Larry, I'm tired of fighting. Its anxious work when you have women to protect."

Proceeding hastily, but with all due caution, they were soon beyond the main streets, passing straggling houses, and at last reaching a spot where Dawson drew them aside, and his man came forward with the mules.

This was a seasonable diversion, for the women were both panting and exhausted with their hurried walk, and ready enough to accept a seat upon two of the most lightly laden of the beasts. Then, after listening for awhile, to make sure that they were not followed, Dawson gave the word; his man started off, leading the first mule, and the others followed in regular file, leaving the three men to form a rear guard in case of pursuit.

And now began the slow, regular pacing of the mules that was to be kept up for hours and hours and days upon days. Under the circumstances, they decided to keep on without pause for the rest of the night, the dawn coming to show their wearied anxious faces, those of the men being marked by traces of the encounter, but the rising sun seemed to bring with it brightness of spirit—they were away from the city, out upon the open plain, and at last bound upon their adventure.

To the men the elation was not unmingled with anxiety, for there were many dangers they knew they had to encounter, even if they eluded the men who seemed to have marked them down for prey; but the women were not so impressed: in spite of disturbed rest they soon began to look buoyant and hopeful, ready, too, to enter into the spirit of the journey and talk about its aims. But this would be principally to Larry, the two leaders of the expedition being anxiously considering their route.

"You have no fear then about finding the place?" Adams asked.

"None at all," was the rejoinder; "I only want time. Yonder is our first land-mark," he added, pointing to the towering peaks of Mount Diavolo. "When once we reach the rising ground there, good-bye to the tracks, for then I work by this."

As he spoke he took out a small compass, and showed its quivering needle pointing without deviation to the north.

"There is our safeguard," he said, "and by that we must travel."

Some refreshments were then partaken of, but without stopping, for they were still on the regular beaten track; but about ten o'clock, when the sun was growing painfully hot, and the ground around became mountainous, Dawson arrested the party as if by instinct at a gap between the steep ranges of hills.

"Quick!" he said, "this will do; the ground here is strong, and shows no traces, but we may have to go over sand and swamps soon and must leave no trace."

He had prepared for this beforehand, and now produced from one of the mule packages a bundle of small squares of rug, thick with wool, and set the example of tying them over the hoofs of the mules, turning each into a soft pad, and much to the disgust of one who made several efforts to kick them off, but without effect.

"Now, then, a stretch down the valley of a couple of miles," said Dawson; "and then we'll have a midday rest."

Setting his man to lead, Dawson then chose the stoniest part he could find, pointed the way and himself brought up the rear, after carefully examining the track to see that they had left no trace behind, and seeing none, for the way was too hard to show the print of a single hoof.

Walking still at some distance behind, he paused again and again to climb some eminence, and look back over the sun-dazzled track by which they had come, scanning it long and carefully with a glass, and each time descending more full of confidence, till, closing up with the party, they now entered a gloomy, shadowy valley, which looked as if it had never been traversed since the creation; and the women involuntarily shuddered as they gazed up at the threatening rocks, which seemed as if they might at any moment topple down upon their heads.

But the place was cool and grateful after the parching wild they had crossed. It was rocky and stony to a degree, but moss grew in the hollow, and a stream of pure clear water trickled amidst the stones, ever and again forming pools, from one of which the mules drank with avidity; and when, after a couple of miles of tiring, scrambling travel, such as only mules could have achieved, they came to a more open sunlit spot, it was hailed as the very perfection of a halting-place, the mules were unburdened, and tethered where they could browse without kicking each other into lameness. A shady recess beneath an overhanging rock decided upon as refectory, provisions unpacked, and while Dawson, rifle in hand, retraced his steps for some little distance to look out for the danger he apprehended in every bush, a meal was prepared, and, on his return with the cheery announcement, "All's well!" partaken of *al fresco* with no slight enjoyment and thankfulness.

"I don't much like delaying, but we must have rest," said Dawson, who now thoroughly took the lead; "we must have rest at proper time and place; so take it now while the sun is so hot, and I'll have the first watch."

This was opposed by Adams, who, however, gave way upon its being understood that he was to have the next watch; and soon four of the party were reclining in the shade, Dawson turning away somewhat disappointed at the coolness with which his kind and manly attentions to her comfort were received by Mary.

Taking his rifle, he was about to stroll across the valley to get a good look out, when his attention was taken up by the motions of Larry, who was busy over one of the small packages with knife and string.

"What is it, Larry?" he said— "Why don't you have a nap?"

"And is it go to slape and lave good food to be wasted by that black haythen in this way," he said with contempt, as he bound up one corner of a rice bag.

"Waste? food?" said Dawson.

"Yis, sor," said Larry. Here's this bag been laking all the way here, and might have gone on laking if I hadn't seen to it; while the black lookin' spalpeen as had charge—look at him!"

He pointed to where the man was sleeping heavily in the shadow of a rock; but Dawson took no heed, for a horrible dread had come upon him like a cold chill—had that rice been falling grain by grain and leaving a well-marked track by which they could be run down?

For a moment he was for arousing the whole party and hurrying on at once. Then he cursed his carelessness—this Irishman finding out that which he, as leader of the expedition, should have seen.

But soon he grew calmer; the chances were very much against the white grains being noticed amidst the loose stones, white, many of them, as the rice itself. All that he need do was to keep careful watch and proceed with more caution.

A little quiet thought confirmed this, though he looked anxiously again and again along the way they had come, in search of danger. There might be peril in front, but on either side they were safe, the precipitous sides of the valley would protect them—pursuit was the danger he apprehended—pursuit from those who, he was sure, knew of his project, and would, if possible, track him down.

"It will depend on whose is the clearest brain," said Dawson to himself; and then he turned to Larry, who had just finished his task. "You'll lie down now," he said. "You must be tired."

"Tired!" said Larry, in a tone of disgust; "tired! I'm a man who has raped all day and all one moonlight night at a stretch. Why this is play, yer honour. If ye'll let me, I'll just go about making observations close behind, and never say nothin' at all."

Dawson nodded, and they went thoughtfully on, peering amongst the stones and rocks, some of which were of green serpentine, veined with creamy white or glistening with diallage, while others shone in a way that whispered of mineral treasures within.

"An' will we find silver an' goold, by-an'-by among the rocks an' stones?" said Larry at last, in a cautious whisper, as if such a subject should not be lightly touched.

"I hope so, Larry," was the reply. "The mineral wealth about here is very great."

"Good luck to us!" said Larry, sententiously, as he picked up fragment after fragment and turned it over.

"I wonder what goold may be like," he said at last.

"Why, like gold, man," said Dawson, smiling.

"I don't know about that same, sir, whin its in a state of nature. They showed me a hape of tin wanst, and it ought to have been shining, and white as silver; but, bless you, it was for all the world like a lot of brown ground coffee, very fine and powdhry. An' p'raps goold may be the same. Would yer honour let me have a look through that spy-glass of yours?"

"To be sure, Larry," was the answer, for Dawson seemed to take to the Irishman's frank-ways. "There," he said, adjusting the glass; "that's about your focus."

"Sure an' any focus 'll do for me, yer honour," said Larry, taking the glass, while Dawson explained to him that gold was not found in dark granules like tin, but in yellow nuggets or veined in rock; when Larry, who had been gazing earnestly down the pass, touched him on the arm.

"Suppose, yer honour, you drop down behind this bit of a rock here, and take the glass and have a look down the valley?"

"Is anything coming, Larry?" he exclaimed anxiously, as he snatched the glass.

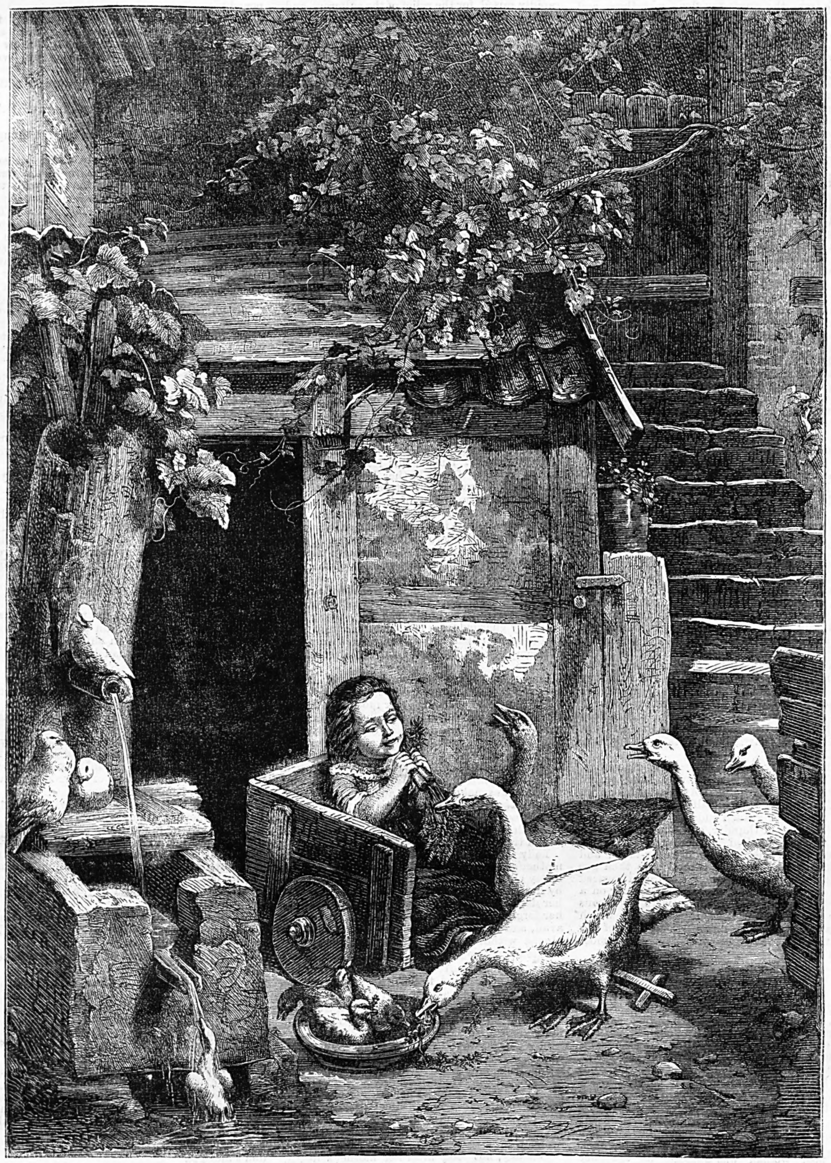
"I'm not that sure," said Larry, coolly; "but look a bit to the left of the rock, like a big pratee sticking up on a mole hill, and see if you can't see the ugly face of the spalpeen whose head I rubbed."

Dawson dropped out of sight on the instant, and, resting his glass upon the rock which sheltered them, took a long and careful survey.

"One—two—three—four in sight," he said to himself, and then aloud to Larry, in a cold hard voice, "You are quite right, Larry; they are on our track."

"Bedad," said Larry, coolly; "it's strange how fond a man gets of a stick like this when once he's had a taste on his head."

(To be continued.)



FEATHERED FRIENDS.

Cerf Vola, the Esquimaux Dog.

Captain Butler, in the account of his recent travels, through the boundless wastes of the Saskatchewan and the Peace Rivers, gives some most interesting sketches of the character of this dog, which was a most faithful, well-tried servant and companion to him, not only during his later travels in the "Wild North Land," but also throughout his arduous exploration of the "Great Lone Land." Speaking of the numerous changes, incident on the colonisation of a new teritory, that had taken place since he was last in the district referred to, he says:

"Amidst all these changes of scene and society there was one thing still unchanged on the confines of the Red River. Close to the stream, at the place known as the Point of Frogs, an old friend met me with many tokens of recognition. A tried companion was he through many long days of wintry travel. There, as fresh and hearty as when I had parted from him two years before, stood Cerf Vola, the Esquimaux dog, who had led my train from Cumberland, on the Lower Saskatchewan, across the ice of the great lakes. Of the four dogs he alone remained. Two years is a long time in the life of any dog, but a still longer period in that of a hauling dog; and Cerf Vola's comrades of that date had gone the way of all earthly things.

"To become the owner of this old friend again, was a work of necessity. Strong and stout as of yore, clean-limbed, long-woolled, deep-chested, with ears pointed forward, and tall close curled over his broad back, Cerf Vola still stood the picture of an Esquimaux.

"Of all the dogs I have known he possessed the largest share of tact. He never fought a pitched battle, yet no dog dared dispute his supremacy. Other dogs had to maintain their headship by many a deadly conflict, but he quietly assumed it, and invariably his assumption was left unchallenged, nay, even upon his arrival at some Hudson Bay fort, some place wherein he had never before set foot, he was wont to instantly appoint himself director-general of all the company's dogs, whose days from earliest puppyhood had been passed within the palisades. I have often watched him at this work, and marvelled by what mysterious power he held his sway. I have seen two or three large dogs flee before a couple of bounds merely made by him in their direction, while a certain will-some-one-hold-me-back kind of look pervaded his face, as though he was only prevented from rending his enemy into small pieces by the restraining influence which the surface of the ground exercised upon his legs.

"His great weight, no doubt, carried respect with it. At the lazy time of the year he weighed nearly 100 pounds, and his size was in no way diminished by the immense coat of hair and fine fur which enveloped him. Had Sir Boyle Roche known this dog he would not have given to a bird alone the faculty of being in two places at once, for no mortal eyes could measure the interval between Cerf Vola's demolishment of two pieces of dog-meat, or pemmican, flung in different directions at the same moment.

"During the three months which had elapsed since his arrival at the forts, Cerf Vola had led an idle life; he had led his train occasionally to Fort à la Corne, or hauled a light sled along the ice of the frozen rivers, but these were only desultory trips, and his days had usually passed in peace and plenty.

"Perhaps I am wrong in saying peace, for the introduction of several strange dogs had occasioned much warfare, and although he had invariably managed to come off victorious, victory was not obtained without some loss. I have before remarked that he possessed a very large bushy tail. In time of war this appendage was carried prominently over his back, something after the manner of the plumes upon the casque of a knight in olden times, or the modern helmet of a dragoon in the era of the Peninsula war.

"One day, while he was engaged in a desperate struggle with a bumptious new-comer, a large ill-conditioned mongrel, which had already been vanquished, seeing his victor fully occupied, deemed it an auspicious moment for revenge, and, springing upon the bushy tail, proceeded to attack it with might and main. The unusual noise brought me to the door to separate the combatants while yet the tail was intact; but so unlooked-for had been the assault, that it was found upon examination to be considerably injured. With the aid of a needle and thread, it was repaired as best we could, Cerf Vola apparently understanding what the surgical operation meant, for although he indulged in plenty of uproar at every stitch, no attempt at biting was made by him. He was now, however, sound in body and in tail, and he tugged away at his load in blissful ignorance that fifteen hundred miles of labour lay before him." These, however, and a thousand more added to them, he accomplished, always keeping at the head of the team, and oftener than not drawing more than his share of a heavy load. By this untiring perseverance he was justly rewarded with a well-purchased freedom; and although he took readily to civilised life, "there were two facts in civilisation which caused him unutterable astonishment—a brass band and a butcher's stall. He fled from the one and howled with delight before the other." So attached was Captain Butler to this gallant old dog that he is not content with only eulogising him in prose, but sets forth the excellent qualities of his dumb companion in some pleasantly-written verses.

The Bradfield Flood.

The object of the great artificial reservoir at Bradfield in Yorkshire was to supply water to Sheffield by damming up the small river Loxley and adjoining rivulets among the hills. The reservoir so formed was situated about eight miles from Sheffield. This reservoir, begun in 1859, was intended to hold the drainage of four thousand three hundred acres, and to contain six hundred and ninety-one million gallons of water. It was nearly completed, but had not yet been used. The embankment, at the base, was four hundred yards long, five hundred feet wide, one hundred feet high, twelve feet wide at the summit, and about four hundred thousand cubic feet of material had been expended on it.

Friday, March 11, 1864, was destined to see the destruction of this costly and gigantic work. Heavy rains had swollen the streams, filling the reservoir almost to the brim. Still, all appeared safe. At length in the course of that day, which was very stormy, a small crack was observed in the embankment. Mr. Fountain, one of the contractors, pronounced the crack to have arisen from the water penetrating the inner puddle-wall of the reservoir, and so forcing the top forward. There was no danger—not a bit; He, however, at once despatched his son on horseback to Sheffield to Mr. Gunson, the resident engineer, to inform him of the crack; and off through the darkness the young Yorkshireman dashed to the town. Mr. Fountain and his men then set to work to open the valves of the outer pipes, to carry off the surplus water, which roared like discharges of cannon as it broke loose, and made the very ground tremble. After the pipes were thus relieved, no change was noticed in the crack, but one of the men fancied, through the darkness, that he observed that the water seemed lower on the inner side of the embankment than the ominous crack on the outer side. Between nine p.m. and ten p.m., however, the spectators, reassured, left the men with the lanterns quietly and busily at work.

At about ten p.m. Mr. Gunson and Mr. Craven, the contractor, darted through Damflask, on their way to the reservoir, in a gig drawn by a fast horse. On their way they met frightened people, alarmed by the first mounted messenger, driving cattle up the hillsides, or carrying sick or infirm people in carts to a place of safety. They found the crack wide enough now to admit a man's hand, but they saw no danger, and even walked over the spot to examine the waste-weir. The water did not run over. Mr. Fountain at once said: "If we don't relieve the dam of water, there'll be a blow-up in half an hour." They then prepared to blow up the weir by gunpowder; but the powder would not catch. Gunson and Swinden went back with lanterns to measure and see if the crack was above or below the water in the reservoir. As Gunson stopped with his lantern towards the end of the crack, and then looked up, he saw, to his horror, a sheet of foaming white water rolling over the top of the embankment, and down into the crack. Still anxious to examine the valve-house, to see how much water was escaping, he crept cautiously down the slope of the embankment. But Swinden, cooler, and more alarmed, called out to his friend not to stay a moment in the valve-house. It was indeed time to flee, for at that moment, as Mr. Gunson cast an ominous look upward, he saw an opening thirty feet wide in the embankment, and down came the water in a vast avalanche.

"It's all up. The embankment is going!" he cried to his friends; and the two ran across the embankment at full speed for their lives. Just then, the powder at the waste-weir blew up with a loud explosion. In a great deluge the water followed the two men so fast, that Gunson began to forget himself; but his cooler friend dragged him out of its terrible path. In an instant, the chasm in the great earth rampart gaped wider. The centre of the embankment crumbled away, and the vast flood of one hundred and fourteen million tons of water, now free to work out its hideous will, rolled on, an overwhelming avalanche, that no power could have staid, and swept down the valley, bearing away, with a roar like thunder, houses and mills as if they were haystacks—cattle, trees, and human beings as if they were flies. It was then exactly two minutes after midnight. A second terrific rush swept away the remainder of the embankment. The gap was one hundred and ten yards wide at the top, and opened seventy feet deep. In forty-seven minutes the reservoir was empty. The velocity of the flood was eighteen miles an hour, and, to use the forcible words of an eye-witness, "Not even a Derby-day horse could have carried the warning in time to have saved the poor people down the valley." For about three-quarters of a mile the flood did no special harm, as there were few houses near the river; but it tore up trees, washed away banks, tore down huge rocks, carried away Annet-bridge, and destroyed roads. One block of stone, thirty-six feet long, weighing nearly sixty tons, was carried some distance.

The first house swept away was Annet House, a small farmstead. Mr. Empsall, the farmer, was sitting up waiting for a lodger; his wife, three boys, and another lodger, were in bed. A little before twelve, a pale-faced labourer rushed in shouting: "It's coming! it's coming!" Empsall instantly called up his household, and got them out, carrying their clothes on their heads, He also drove out a cow and two calves. Five minutes after, the flood came, and swept clean away the house, outbuildings, and garden, not leaving even a trace of them. Mr. Gunson came up a moment before, and cried: "The house is going! the house is going!" At Lower Bradfield, the destruction was overwhelming. Two stone bridges were destroyed; the school-house, a blacksmith's and wheelwright's shops were swept off, and two three-storied corn-mills, built with heavy stone basements, seemed suddenly to melt away. The very rock was torn up from under the foundations. Mr. Joseph Ibbotson, an eye-witness, hearing the cry: "The flood is coming!" leaped out of bed, looked out of window, heard the roar, and could just discern the rushing water. He ran out of the house to within twenty yards of the flood. The very earth seemed rent asunder, as the water rushed on at race-horse speed. "It seemed," he says, "as if some angry monster were lashing the hill-sides, crunching up buildings, and filling the air with a wrathful hiss; trees snapped with the sound of pistol-shots, houses staggered for a moment, then melted into the boiling torrent. In five minutes, the bridges, the three-storied mill, the school-house, and the master's house, vanished, and the flood, in its full majesty, rose a mighty wall of water, on a level with the roofs of three-storied houses. The large mill-stones and massive ashlar pillars of the Bradfield mill were not found for many days." These curious facts were verified, and are vouched for, by Mr. Samuel Harrison, who has written an excellent history of the flood.

It is quite certain, however, that many of the Bradfield people had previous inklings of danger. One of them, who went to see the crack (Mr. William Ibbotson), returned home, and said to a neighbour, with true Yorkshire shrewdness: "I can't learn that this cracking of a new embankment is a common thing. Danger or no danger, I don't go to bed. I shall keep my clothes on ready for off."

Suddenly, a little before twelve, through the roar of the wind, Ibbotson heard apparently some drunken labourers shouting. But he listened again, then went out, and heard cries of "It's coming! it's coming! Look out!" He instantly alarmed the neighbours, and helped them to escape.

The first victim soon met its doom. It was the child (only one day old) of Mr. Joseph Dawson, the village tailor of Lower Bradfield. Dawson was awaked by his wife, who had heard some shouting. The man got up, ran to the window, and heard the ghastly cry of "It's coming! it's coming!" darted into a back-room, and sent his brother with his eldest child to a friend's house on the hill. Thinking himself unable to carry his sick wife and new-born child, he asked a man he met at the door to help him. The man replied: "You must run for your life, and save yourself. I have enough to do to save my own life." The poor tailor then returned, and carried down his wife and child, wrapped in blankets. About twenty yards from the door, the flood met them, and knocked them down. Again, at his wife's direction, Dawson turned to the house, and just at the door the flood again struck them, and washed away the child. There was no time to think of the loss; the poor tailor pushed his wife up-stairs, just as the flood poured into the back and front of the house. The water rose six feet inside the rooms. Presently, Dawson's brother came with a ladder, and the man and his wife were carried across from an upper room to the hillside.

Mr. Nicholls, the village schoolmaster of Bradfield, had a narrow escape. He had been to see the crack, and returned home reassured. Nevertheless, his wife was apprehensive, and would not go to bed. Five minutes before the flood came, the pair went out to the school-bridge, and thought there was no more water than usual. He then proposed to go to bed; but Mrs. Nicholls threw on some coal, and refused to go to bed till the fire went out. They then walked to the window, and saw the water rising fast by the garden hedge. Just at that moment some one thundered at the door, and called out: "Escape for your lives! the flood's coming!" Mr. and Mrs. Nicholls instantly rushed across the road and up some steps into a hill-field. All at once, Nicholls, remembering he had left his overcoat in the house, in spite of his wife's screaming, ran back for it. It was a rash venture; Mr. Nicholls could see the flood advancing yards high. The rash schoolmaster, however, snatched his coat, and rushed back up the steps, the spray of the foremost flood blowing in his face. A moment more, and he would have drifted dead upon the torrent.

The scene at Bradfield was extraordinary. It was like the end of the world, as the country people quaintly said. The whole population (those safe and those in danger) ran out in their plain night-clothes, and fled, shrieking and screaming, to the hills and upper fields. In the miller's house alone thirty people collected. In one cottage the family took refuge in the upper rooms, their escape being cut off. An infirm man, lodging in a lower room, stood for some time with the water nearly up to his mouth, but eventually succeeded in escaping upstairs. A man named Hartley, who lived near the river, doggedly refused to leave his house. "If it takes all I have," he said to his imploring wife, "it might as well take me too." His wife then fled; but the flood did not, after all, quite reach the house. A farmer named Hawk was warned in time, and fled. Five minutes after, the flood swept his farm-house completely away, and one of the cows was carried five miles down the river to Hillsbro'.

Extraordinary escapes were very numerous, and the courage and promptitude shown was, in many cases, remarkable. At Marsden's farm, called Rochester House, half a mile from Damflask, the water rushed suddenly into the house with the noise of thunder, and the lower rooms were instantly filled. Marsden, with quick resolve, broke a leg off the dressing-table, and knocked a hole through the roof. He then got out, drew up his wife and child, and carried them on to the hillside, which was nearly on a level with the roof. There were numerous other escapes of an extraordinary kind, which we have not space to notice. The cases of destruction to life and property were most afflicting.

At Malin-bridge the flood spent its utmost fury. Within the distance of one hundred yards, more than twenty houses were destroyed, and one hundred and two lives taken. Among stones, trees, and shattered machinery, rolled barrels, mattresses, dead cattle, and broken waggons. The roar of the flood resembled a thousand steam-engines letting off steam. At the same moment houses were falling, trees snapping, the wind was howling, and women and children were shrieking. At the left-hand side of the river a row of twelve cottages and two shops was washed away, and several families drowned. An infant was carried off by the water from her mother's arms, and the mother left dead among the ruins. One poor woman was standing at the door talking to the watchman, when the flood came down the valley. The watchman ran up the hill, and saved his life. The woman ran and closed her door, but was instantly drowned, and the house demolished. A man in this ill-fated row had a narrow escape. He, his wife, two children, and his wife's father, were washed down the flood. The wife and children were soon lost sight of, but the man held on to a bulk of timber, and floated on to a heap of trees and debris that were piled up against a house. Calling out for help as he passed a window, he was pulled in, half clad as he was, and almost exhausted; but his family all perished. In a detached house near this road twelve persons of a family were drowned. At the *Stag* publichouse, at Malin-bridge, eleven persons were lost. The brother of the landlady had only just returned from Sheffield when he saw the flood approach; he ran to save his sister, the landlady of the *Stag*, when the water knocked him down on his back, and with difficulty he saved himself.

At the Limerick Wheel, a crinoline wire manufactory, damage was done to the extent of more than ten thousand pounds. There was only one man at work; he had gone home, but was suddenly sent back to soften steel for the next day's work. He met his death by the explosion of five furnaces full of molten steel, which burst in consequence of the flood generating steam. He was found several weeks afterwards buried under a heap of rubbish, scalded and frightfully disfigured. In a house at Hillbridge, Robert Graham, his wife, and six children, were knocked into the water by a falling wall. Graham, by incessant exertion, managed to crowd the whole family upon a floating bed, and they were all eventually rescued.

At the Eagle Works, Neepside, a poor woman awakened by the screaming of the pigs, got out of bed, and looking out, saw the flood. She instantly awoke her husband, and said: "O John! the world's at an end!" "Nay, my lass, it cannot be," was the husband's reply. This couple were saved, just as they were thinking of taking to the roof.

An incident or two that occurred in the more immediate neighbourhood of Sheffield, must not be passed over. In Cotton Mill-row, near Alma-street, a poor old woman rushed out into the flood, and a young man in a story above, seeing her in danger, let down a sheet; she caught it, and was pulled up; but just as she was within his reach, a rush of water carried her away, and she disappeared with a scream. At Bower Spring, a young man named Varney was riding through the water, when a piece of floating timber struck his horse. It threw him over its head, and he fell into the water and was drowned. When his body was found, both hands were clenched and raised before his face, as if he had died fighting.

The bodies, when laid out for identification, were strangely contrasted. Some had died as if in sleep; others seemed to have struggled to the last; their teeth were clenched, and they were torn and disfigured.

The inquiry at the inquest led to no special result. It was, however, proved that there were defective points in the construction of the embankment, and that there had not been sufficient means of rapidly letting off the water. A fair sum of money (fifty thousand pounds) was rapidly raised for the relief of the sufferers, and, to their great credit, the Sheffield workmen unanimously contributed a day's wages. The value of the mills, dwelling-houses, and other kinds of property destroyed was estimated at nearly two millions; and the number of persons who perished by the inundation was two hundred and fifty. Such, without reckoning minor inconveniences, was the result of trying to supply a town with water from an artificial reservoir.—*Chambers's Journal.*

The Fatal Promise.

Women's friendships have often been derided, but sometimes they are only *too* faithful.

Such was the bond that united the Lady Isabel Macdonald to Mrs. Forbes, the wife of the young Laird of Achinroch. Lady Isabel was an earl's only child and heiress, though her father's title would pass to a distant cousin, and cousins in Scotland count relationship beyond the twentieth, and even fortieth degree. She was married early to one of her father's neighbours, a young man of good family and still goodlier acres, who, though a sportsman pure and simple, yet avoided the degrading excesses that in days of old marked the career of Scotch, and other, country gentlemen.

Mrs. Forbes, the daughter of an old house and of undoubtedly loyal ancestry, was also a near neighbour of Lady Isabel, and married about the same time as her friend; but less fortunate in her after lot, found in her husband only a coarse and ill-mannered lout, addicted to all the vices of the common run of lairds, and a representative of but very few of their virtues. This circumstance drew the bond of friendship still closer between the two young wives, and Jessie Forbes consoled herself for her own forlorn situation by passing many months of the year in her friend's society.

Lady Isabel was the happy mother of several fine and healthy, if not intellectual children; and Mrs. Forbes had only one boy, whom she jealously guarded from her husband's influence, and tried as much as she could to throw into the company of the Macdonald children of his own age.

Some years after her marriage Lady Isabel received a terrible shock, which almost threatened to affect her mind. Her mother had been thrown from her carriage over a precipice in the mountains near her home, and was carried to Lady Isabel's house bleeding and insensible. She never recovered consciousness, though her daughter, with whom she had recently had some slight misunderstanding, adjured her by all that was holy to speak to her, and even caused the doctor to administer restoratives which were dangerous, from their exceeding strength and the weakness of the sufferer to whom they were applied.

Lady Isabel, frantic with grief, writhed by her mother's couch, calling upon her in vain, violently chafing her hands, and otherwise showing by her distracted demeanour how vehement was her desire to speak with her mother and obtain her forgiveness before she died. All was of no avail, and the unconscious woman passed away almost without a sign that might apparently divide unconsciousness from death. Isabel was dragged by force from the bedside, but calm could not be restored to her. Her father, who had been present from the beginning, seemed to have lost all influence over her, and her husband and children were entirely powerless to divert her thoughts for one instant.

Mrs. Forbes was summoned, but the unhappy, daughter raved and wept, called herself accursed, a matricide, and declared that death alone could make her happy, by transferring her to a sphere where she could speak to her mother and obtain her forgiveness. All soothing remedies, moral and physical, were of no avail; even the clergyman could do nothing to calm the excited woman.

One day, not long after her mother's death, Isabel Macdonald herself fell into a state of utter unconsciousness, and seemed about to follow the parent she so wildly mourned. The physicians, who had already been in attendance, watched her anxiously; Mrs. Forbes never left the bedside. Mr. Macdonald was moody and abstracted, neglected his guns and hounds, and lounged uneasily about the rooms adjoining his wife's. His genuine sorrow was very touching, and the whole household seemed to be in mourning. The doctor looked grave—perhaps I should say puzzled—at this protracted swoon, from which nothing could rouse the pale and motionless form. At last, when it had continued for three days, one of them ventured to pronounce the young wife dead, and her husband and friend could not gainsay the suggestion. Still the thing seemed miraculous and awful to them. Isabel had *suddenly* become unconscious and rigid, and since that no sign of pain and no trace of decomposition had appeared. There had been nothing to mark the moment of death, and now there was nothing to prove that death had indeed taken place. Yet who had ever heard of a three days' swoon? Some of the old retainers whispered the word "witchcraft," with bated breath and frightened looks, but the doctors indignantly glanced at each other and swore that Lady Isabel Macdonald was a corpse, and had died naturally of an internal disease.

A great many things were unknown to the country doctors of remote localities two or three generations ago, as they are even now, to a great many practitioners in far-off corners of the globe. So at last the orders were given for the funeral, and a few women were left with the corpse to lay it out.

The poor husband was in the next room, and one or two of the children were playing at the foot of the huge old-fashioned sofa whereon he was half-stretched. Suddenly a suppressed noise was heard from the death-chamber, and then a scream, and then a sound as of several women rushing to the door. The young man looked up, but the noise having ceased, he fell again into his uneasy musing. There was another door to the room next him, and it was through that the affrighted women had fled.

Shaking with terror, they recounted to their fellow-servants how "my leddy" had opened her eyes as they were handling her, and said something — *what* they could not tell — and turned round with a sigh that sent the blood running cold through their veins. They had made for the door, and rushed down the passage and stairs, afraid of looking behind them. But now should not some one go and tell the master what had happened? No one, however, seemed willing to bear such "uncanny" tidings.

In the meanwhile, the door between the bed-room and dressing-room was slowly opened and young Macdonald, his eyes starting out of his head, saw the white-clad figure of his wife enter gently, and stand gazing at him. A stony stare of horror was all his answer; but when the figure spoke, he fairly sprang from the sofa, and, seizing the affrighted children, tried to reach the second door of the apartment, leading into a sitting-room beyond. His wife again spoke, in bewildered accents:

"Kenneth! what is it? What has happened?"

He turned back his head, pushing the children before him into the outer room, and stood irresolute on the threshold. Now he came to think of it, the voice was very natural.

"Isabel! are you alive?" were his first words.

"Alive!" she said, in astonishment. "Are you joking?"

"God forgive me! joking, no! But I thought you were dead."

His wife smiled strangely. He seemed hardly recovered yet. A noise in the outer room was heard, and the old father, with two or three frightened-looking women, came in. At sight of their mistress, the latter fled. The man stood silent and transfixed. Soon, however, the supposed corpse made them believe in her real and living identity, and the doctors were again sent for. It was ascertained that a cataleptic fit had ensued on the great agony of mind sustained by Lady Isabel at the death of her mother. Her health and strength gradually returned, and her life went on much the same as before, except that from time to time the same kind of fit recurred, and during the intervals, Lady Isabel's mind was a prey to great melancholy and gloom.

Mrs. Forbes alone seemed to exercise a cheering effect on her friend, but the state of mind into which the unfortunate woman had fallen may be conceived by the following conversation.

The two were seated in the morning room of Kiltruin Castle, while the children were playing noisily in a deserted hall above.

"Jessie," said the Lady Isabel, "did you believe I was dead that time when I first had a fit?"

"I did, dear, after a time. I never heard of those fits before, and I could not understand it."

"Do you think I shall ever forget that, Jessie, when my own husband drew away from me, and my children looked scared, as if they had seen a ghost?"

"You must not let your mind dwell on it, Izzy."

"It was a punishment for my disagreement with my poor mother; I am a doomed woman now, so that even my own shrink from me. I would rather die now than live on under this awful ban."

Mrs. Forbes tried to dispel the gloom of Isabel's tortured mind, but even she could hardly succeed this time, and both worked at their embroidery in silence till her friend said abruptly:

"Jessie, do you know I would rather be you with your wicked husband, than myself with all the love of Kenneth and my father and children, and this horror of horrors for ever standing between me and happiness. I feel as if the cold of the grave were always about me. I feel, whenever a draught blows on me, as if it was the rush of air from a charnel-house. I cannot bear to go to church even, for our pew is directly over the vault. And when I wake up in the night I fancy I am in a coffin, and my mother is kneeling on it to keep it down. Oh! I am miserable, night and day, and I dare not tell Kenneth."

"You should not tell yourself, dear," answered Mrs. Forbes, soothingly. "And now let us talk of something else."

But her friend would not. She grew graver, and said:

"Now, Jessie, if you love me, and you always told me you did, you will promise me something I am going to ask."

"Yes," said Jessie, gayly.

"You have promised now, mind."

"Oh! but if it is anything horrid——"

"Hush!" interrupted Isabel. "It is only to prevent something horrid. Now, wherever you may be, promise me that if you hear of my death, you will come to me and see my body before they put me in the coffin. Then you will pierce my heart with a golden bodkin, to make sure that I shall not be buried alive."

"This is too horrible to think of, Isabel. You don't mean it."

"I do, solemnly. I ask it of you because you are my greatest friend; but if you will not promise to do it, aye, and swear it on the Bible, too, I shall bribe some one to do me this service, and make it well worth her while to obey me. Will you do it for me?"

Mrs. Forbes hesitated; but at last, remembering that if this awful mission were even hinted to an unscrupulous menial, it might be the means of a terrible crime being committed and going for ever unpunished, she consented to take the oath upon the Bible.

"Now I am quite content," said Lady Isabel, more cheerfully. "If I should be alive, the pain will be nothing compared to the agony of waking up, a living prisoner, within a leaden coffin. But most likely they will never attempt to bury me until so long after my supposed death that it will be almost impossible to be deceived; still I feel all the happier for knowing that the worst is provided for. Thanks, my friend, for setting my poor mind at ease upon that score."

The terrible paet remained a secret between the friends. Lady Isabel gave Mrs. Forbes a long, tapering golden bodkin, with a point so sharp that one stab with it could not fail to produce instant death. The unsuspecting husband continued to cheer his wife up as well as he could, and the children grew in strength and rustic beauty, hardy plants of the mountains and forests.

A few years passed, and Mrs. Forbes, of Achinroch became a widow, and went to England for a short stay with some relatives of her mother. England was a long journey then from the remote part of Scotland where Lady Isabel lived, but the two friends corresponded as often as the uncertain posts allowed. After a while Mrs. Forbes received no answer to several letters, and, fearing something was wrong, became very uneasy about the inhabitants of Kiltruin Castle.

The silence continued, and remembering the contingency her friend had so much feared, Mrs. Forbes started on her homeward way. Before going to Achinroch, which was some ten miles distant from Kiltruin Castle, she stopped her carriage at the latter place, and hastily inquired whether all were well. The answer was that Lady Isabel was dead, and that the funeral was fixed for the morrow.

Shocked beyond utterance, the young widow asked to see Mr. Macdonald. He was in the library, arranging some of the last details with the steward. The funeral of Lady Isabel was to be a most magnificent affair. All the retainers of her father's family were to follow the coffin with torches inverted, as the funeral was to take place at night, according to a fancy once expressed by the deceased.

Lennox rose as his wife's friend, all travel-stained as she was, came hurriedly into the room. She asked the details of this last and more serious fit, and before long was satisfied that this time there was no doubt of the real death of her poor friend. "Still," she said to herself, "I feel bound by that oath she so solemnly administered to me, to execute her last commands."

Jessie Forbes had the national superstition strongly developed, and owned to a lurking fear that if she neglected the behest of the deceased, the unrestful ghost of her friend would pursue her for ever after, reproaching her for her broken trust.

So, though reluctant and even frightened, she requested the widower to allow her to spend an hour with the corpse, alone and undisturbed. The request, strange as it seemed, was of course granted without delay. The bereaved husband led her into the same large chamber where the first symptom of these fatal visitations had occurred. The room was unchanged, but the curtains were closely drawn, and everything was in that melancholy and stiff order that denotes the want of a living spirit to give animation to the trifling surroundings of a boudoir. The door of the dressing-room was open. Large jars of dried rose and lavender leaves were set in the corners of the room, and near the head of the bed were two tall lighted candles. The coffin, with its beautiful trappings of velvet and its smooth satin lining, lay on trestles in the dressing-room. Mr. Macdonald had wished to delay as long as possible the last soldering of the lead over the head of his wife. The snowy pillows of the bed were covered with lace, and a large satin counterpane, thickly embroidered, an old family relic, lay over the rigid and still beautiful form. The bed was high and old-fashioned, and there were steps near it.

Once alone with the dead, Mrs. Forbes gazed into the still face; the fixed look was unmistakable, the forehead was cold. She breathed a sigh of relief. It was awful to think, however, of the promise that weighed on her mind like an incubus. Yet her trust must be fulfilled. She stood on the steps and bent over, kissing the corpse. The trance had lasted five days and a half now, if trance it were, but that she would not believe. So, tremblingly, and not till she had been for some time in the silent room, she unsheathed the golden bodkin from its slight covering, and turning down the coverlet, felt for her friend's cold heart. The tall candles flickered, and a cold breath seemed to stir the heavy bed curtains. It was only the door of the dressing-room swinging a little in the draft that came from the open window beyond. She took courage and lifted the weapon. Slowly she brought it down, and then plunged it sharply into the left side of the corpse.

A trembling that was not that of her own hand, startled her, and in a second a groan and a convulsion told her what she had done. The corpse turned over on its side.

Hours afterward the attendants entered the room.

The bed was tossed, the corpse half uncovered, and a little congealed blood appeared on the sheets.

On the floor beside the bed lay Mrs. Forbes, in a dead swoon.

It was a scene of awful gloom; the desecrated bed of death, the ghastly trace of dull red blood, the bodkin still partly embedded in the body.

Mr. Macdonald gave strict orders that nothing of the fatal mystery should be divulged, and when Mrs. Forbes was sufficiently recovered, he and she conferred long together on the terrible occurrence. He subsequently found, among his wife's papers, an account of the promise exacted years before from her friend; this relation being signed and attested, and then sealed, with this superscription:

"For my husband: to be opened after my funeral."

If anything could console the unfortunate woman who, still more than Lady Isabel, may be called the victim of the fatal promise, it was the opening of this paper. Very little of the real story was publicly known, but all the people at Achinroch can tell you to this day that Mrs. Forbes never left off wearing mourning, and passed her life in the strictest retirement, devoting herself entirely to the care and instruction of the poor.

Family Likenesses.

In going through the picture-galleries of noblemen's mansions, one is often struck with family likenesses in different generations. Sometimes the general likeness is lost, and then it casts up again. You may trace a high forehead, a prominent nose, and piercing dark eyes for centuries. The soft features of George I. and II. are conspicuous in George III. and his descendants. Each of us may be said to possess some kind of likeness to one or other of our ancestors. The resemblance is more particularly marked in parts of the person. A man's hands may resemble those of his paterna grandmother, while his feet are exactly like those of his maternal grandfather. We are in some respects composed of bits of predecessors. What is equally curious, there are mental as well as physical resemblances. A man will occasionally find himself performing some act precisely as he remembers his father doing the same thing many years ago. The tracing of family likenesses may be made illustrative of history. A writer in *Notes and Queries* (1852) has the following remarks on the subject: "Any one who knows the face of the present Duke of Manchester will see a strong likeness to his great ancestor, through six generations, the Earl of Manchester of the Commonwealth, as engraved in Lodge's *Portraits.* The following instance is more remarkable: Elizabeth Hervey was Abbess of Elstow in 1501. From her brother Thomas is descended, in a direct line, the present Marquis of Bristol. If any one will lay the portrait of Lord Bristol, in Mr. Gage Rokewode's *Thingoe Hundred*, by the side of the sepulchral brass of the Abbess of Elstow, figured in Fisher's *Bedfordshire Antiquities*, they cannot but be struck by the strong likeness between the two faces. This is valuable evidence on the disputed point whether portraits were attempted in sepulchral brasses."—*Dr. Robert Chambers.*

Two Lovers.

Two lovers by a moss-grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.
O budding time!
O love's best prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carollings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
While petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked;
These pressed each other while they rocked—
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees:
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide;
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said "Once more.'
O memories!
O past that is!

—George Eliott.

Literary Rambler.

A QUEER LOT.

It is notorious to all travellers by sea, how dull their shipmates become after a day or two. Dana, the American, acutely remarks that it is the having to go without their daily dose of newspaper reading which makes ocean-going travellers so little entertaining as companions; and the fact is sadly suggestive of a general poverty of ideas. Dana is speaking of American or English travellers; foreigners, who seldom read newspapers, have not this excuse for their dulness on board ship. It is a fact, however, that a man will learn very little of, let us say, the inner life and modes of thought of his fellow passengers, even in a long voyage. I once travelled by a large steamer, the captain of which had spent half a lifetime in conveying passengers of various nationalities, chiefly Brazilians and Portuguese. It was the first time I had encountered individuals of either nation, and I was curious. "What sort of people do you find them?" I asked the captain, one day, as we paced the quarter-deck together. "Well, sir," he answered, "they're a queer lot, and that's the truth of it!" "How so?" "For one thing," said the captain, "they all of them, man, woman, and child, squeeze their feet into boots that it gives a man the cramp to look at." "And what besides?" The captain turned short upon me, as if the second development of nationality was really almost beyond his patience. "*When they eat roast beef, sir, they won't take a bit of mustard with it. Now that's a fact!*" When four or five Portuguese, of the shopkeeper or small merchant class enter a railway carriage or a diligence where I am sitting, and talk to each other at the top of their voices for several hours at a stretch, I consider myself under no delicacy as to reporting what they say, but, if I may be believed, the report would be a dull one. The Portuguese shopkeeper in his own shop is polite, sleepy, listless, thoroughly inefficient, and apparently quite indifferent as to whether he sells his goods or keeps them. He would always rather gossip than deal, and seems to be in fear that if he diminishes his stock, he will have to take the trouble of renewing it. He yawns across the counter at his customer, and makes a foreigner laugh at the incongruity of a man keeping things for sale, and not caring to sell them. The same man, out of his shop, is a different being—a talkative, pushing, rather noisy, and not over well-mannered person.—*New Quarterly Magazine.*

GENERAL BECKWITH.

There has appeared a "Life of General Beckwith," who devoted his life and his fortune to assisting the inhabitants of the Protestant valleys of Piedmont. General Beckwith was born at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, on the 2nd of October, 1789. His father, John Beckwith, was descended from an old English family, and had emigrated to America, where he married Mary Haliburton, sister of the Supreme Judge at Halifax. Young Beckwith left Halifax, at the age of fourteen, to join the English army. It was not long before he had a share in many engagements. His first campaign was in Hanover. In 1807 he was in the expedition against Denmark, and in 1808 in that against Sweden. In 1809 he went to the Spanish Peninsula with the Duke of Wellington, and was present at the retreat from Corunna, where Sir John Moore lost his life. When Napoleon was banished to Elba, Beckwith went to America, but he was soon after summoned again to return to the army. At Waterloo he was in the very front of the battle. Four horses were killed under him, but he kept his place, and was unhurt till a shot from the retreating enemy broke his left leg. After three months it was amputated, and thus ended the military career of General Beckwith at the age of twenty-six. In the accident he acknowledged a Divine Providence leading him to a nobler life than the profession of arms. "I was," he said, "carried away by the love of glory, but a good God said to me, 'Stop, rascal!' and He cut off my leg; and now I think I shall be the happier for it."—*Day of Rest.*

DICKENS'S DOMESTIC CLOUD.

There is no doubt that so soon as the statement respecting the separation from his wife appeared in "Household Words," an extraordinary revulsion of popular feeling took place against Dickens. He who had been looked upon as the incarnation of every domestic virtue now stood before the world as breaking up his home and casting off his wife, avowedly for no fault of her own, but for the mere capricious gratification of his own morbid fancy. Violent articles were written about him in the newspapers, and the following epigram, not given by Mr. Forster. was largely circulated:

"With tongue and pen no more may Dickens fudge;
In vain for truth and charity he pleads;
The world around the author now we'll judge,
Not by his 'Household Words," but household deeds!"

His acquaintance was split into two sets, one of which sided with Mrs. Dickens, and among the friendships which Dickens lost at that time were those with Miss Burdett Coutts, his partners in "Household Words" and publishers, Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, and his old and intimate ally, Mr. Mark Lemon. He bore up bravely against these troubles, but that the pain of them entered into his soul the following extract from a letter of his to Mr. Yates, dated June 28, 1858, will show: "If you could know how much I have felt within this last month, what a sense of wrong has been upon me, and what a strain and struggle I have lived under, you would see that my heart is jagged and rent and out of shape, that it does not this day leave me hand enough to shape these words." Under these circumstances it was lucky that he found a new excitement in commencing his public readings.—*Mirror*.

GIBRALTAR IN THE MOON.

Gillray was a genuine patriot, and is never more at home than in typifying the John Bull feeling of confidence and pride. During the memorable siege of Gibraltar in 1782-1783, prior to the failure of the grand attack by the combined fleets and floating batteries, he produced "The Castle in the Moon: A New Adventure not mentioned by Cervantes." The rock and fortress are depicted in the moon. Don Quixote, the leanest of knights on the leanest of steeds, stands for Spain, whilst a corpulent Dutchman, on a hungry jackass with empty saddle-bags, acts Sancho. Don Quixote says, "Sancho, we'll sit down before the castle and starve them out." "Starve them out!" replies Sancho; "O, Lord! we're like to be starved out ourselves first." France, as a gaily-dressed monkey on the head of Rozinante, lunges with a toy rapier at the castle in the moon: "Sa, sa! Ah, ah! Dere, I was have dem, dere! Ha, ha!" If, as has been plausibly contended, the once popular belief that one Englishman could beat three Frenchmen, contributed to our beating them in real earnest, Gillray must have done good service by uniformly embodying and fostering our national contempt for our adversaries. — *Quarterly Review.*

ANECDOTE OF CARSTARES.

One interesting anecdote in Mr. Story of Roseneath's book on "William Carstares; a Character and Career of the Revolutionary Epoch," gives us a lively view of Carstares's character and bearing. His sister Margaret lost her husband in 1691.

"A few days after her husband's death," says M'Cormick, "Mr. Carstares came down from London to transact some matters of importance with King William's ministers in Scotland. She, hearing of his arrival, came over to Edinburgh to see him. Upon calling at his lodgings, in the forenoon, she was told he was not at leisure, as several of the nobility and officers of state were just gone in to him. She then bid his servant only whisper him that she desired to know when it would be most convenient for him to see her. He returned for answer, 'Immediately,' and, leaving the company, ran to her, and embraced her in the most affectionate manner. Upon her attempting to make some apology for her unseasonable interruption to business, 'Make yourself easy,' says he; 'these gentlemen are come, not on my account, but their own. They will wait with patience till I return. You know I never pray long.' And, after a short but fervent prayer, adapted to her melancholy circumstances, he fixed the time when he would see her more at leisure, and returned, all in tears, to his company."

The Ladies' Own Corner.

HEAD-DRESS.

It is when the bare shapes of modern bonnets are examined that they look strange and small; when a modiste *a passé par là*, they take very different proportions. What a fouillis of flowers and ribbons! What bows and torsades, agraffes, buckles and aigrettes!

Strings have altogether disappeared, so have, in many cases, crowns. A mere passé now often composes the whole chapeau, but this front is so over loaded with trimmings that it becomes quite a voluminous head-dress.

A tasteful model suited to a blonde is of a fine white rice straw. It has a rather high squarish crown, and little else, for the passé is hardly visible. This crown is encircled with a full torsade of réséda and pale blue faille, and a large aigrette bow is composed of the same. The extreme edge is outlined with a narrow fluting of réséda silk, and clusters of large blush roses, without foliage, are disposed here and there among the folds of the ribbon. A bird's wing is placed upon the left side.

A black tulle bonnet has a crown disposed in bouillonnés and beaded with jet; it is trimmed with black faille and turquoise round the crown, and a black tulle fluting to finish the border. Two black feathers are curled back over the crown, and a cluster of roses is placed in front.

Round hats which are not for the garden are very high in shape, with a narrow, slightly turned-up brim, bound with velvet. The crown is trimmed with a wide écharpe of faille or gros-grains, fastened at the back—a little on one side—into a very large bow, with a metal or jet buckle. A long feather is fastened in front, and thrown back over the crown. Sunshades, which were so very large last year, are now worn of very small dimensions. The ombrelle canne is suitable only for demi-toilet. The small Duchesse is alone admitted with elegant costumes.—*Young Englishwoman.*

SLEEVES AND APRONS.

We must (says a Paris letter) make a digression upon the subject of sleeves. Of all the many fashions introduced of late in this part of a dress, none have retained such continued favour as the revers. Only of revers there is an endless variety. There is the deep coat revers, fastened down with large buttons; the mousquetaire revers, with a dash of military style about them; and a number of fancy revers, among which one of the most novel is that which seems formed of two cuffs put on in opposite directions—one upwards, the other falling over the hand, and generally divided by a bias, ruching, or some other trimming. In some cases the revers or parément is funnel shaped, remaining very wide open at the wrist, in others it lies close over the sleeve, but comes a good deal beyond it.

The Paris correspondent of the *Warehousemen and Drapers' Journal* says: Within the last week or two aprons have appeared, and now dresses of all kinds, even ball dresses, are made with them. It is, in truth, an adaptation of the cuirasse, and the new aprons are called tabliers cuirasses. They are made very tight across the front, so tight, indeed, that the wearer often finds it difficult to sit down, and is forced to balance herself on the very edge of her chair, as our grandmothers did in the time of Queen Charlotte. However, there is no need to exaggerate. The small fichu or scarf worn around the shoulders suits the new style of tablier very well. Some one speaking of the new-fashioned dresses describes them very aptly as resembling the plumage of a peacock, smooth, close-fitting to the figure, with a loose, voluminous tail trailing behind.

DRESS FOR VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA.

"Brisbane," in reply to a correspondent of the *Queen*, says: Both warm and cold dresses will be required. Either a dark linsey or a serge (of a colour that will not stain with salt water) will be useful; also a black alpaca. For the tropics holland dresses and any old silk skirts that can be worn with thin polonaises will be the best. A wide-brimmed hat is necessary, also a turned-up one fitting well to the head for windy weather. Take as much old linen as possible so as to throw it overboard when done with, as it spoils good linen to keep it soiled. All things not wanted during the voyage should be packed in wooden cases lined with zinc (tin is apt to rust), a lining of coarse flannel should be put next the zinc, the contents packed as closely as possible, a piece of flannel laid over all, then a sheet of zinc soldered to the zinc lining, and finally the wooden lid firmly screwed down. The name and address should be painted on, and "not wanted on the voyage" also, as all boxes so marked go to the bottom of the hold, and so much trouble is saved at the time the luggage is got up (generally once a fortnight). Everything possible that is likely to be wanted on board should be taken in the cabin, as opening the boxes and letting the sea air to their contents is very injurious; but if this is not practicable, air-tight tin boxes are best, to be painted, "Wanted on the voyage." Gloves should be folded separately in blue paper, and then every half-dozen pairs wrapped in flannel, then in tinfoil, and lastly in brown paper. The tinfoil if carefully put on excludes all air. All steel things should be wrapped in wash-leather. Plenty of books and work should be taken. No duty was charged on anything we took out.

COST OF LADIES' DRESSES.

In an article upon the dress of women, the *Echo* says: "Perhaps the best notion may be obtained of the increased cost of ladies' dresses from the fact that whereas, some ten years ago, some fourteen or sixteen yards of silk was considered amply sufficient, now it takes from thirty to thirty-four. The working up of all this additional material involves, of course, a most elaborate amount of work, and the price is thus still further added to. A fashionable *modiste* now looks upon five-and-twenty guineas as a very moderate price indeed for a dress. Of silk costumes, to be seen at these houses in Regent-street, few of the best quality are to be had for less than forty guineas. When lace is employed as a trimming to dresses of this kind there is really no limit to their cost, and many a fair dame will go to Court and opera this season clad in fine raiment which has cost more than the average income of a large class of professional men. The increased consumption of expensive silks in this country has been very remarkable since the conclusion of the French Treaty. In 1856 the value of silk, broadstuffs, ribbons, and other manufactures imported amounted to little more than two millions and a quarter, in 1870 it exceeded fifteen millions, and, although there has since been a reduction, it is still three times greater than it was before the treaty was concluded. Where such an enormous quantity of material finds purchasers is a puzzle. It can only be explained by supposing

'That those who dressed well, dress all the more,
And many dress now who never dressed before.'

It is very satisfactory to know that, amid all these changes, the condition of the workpeople employed in the occupation of dress-making has greatly improved. The sewing machine, to a great extent, relieves the seamstress of her drudgery. She is now expected, it is true, to show more taste and greater skill, but then she is better paid and more comfortably accommodated, and her working hours have been considerably curtailed. All the best hands in this business are, as a rule, boarded by their employers, and the household expenses of some of the Regent-street establishments amount to many thousands a year."

PARIS BALLS.

That the last two grand balls of the season (says the *Queen*) should have been due to foreign initiative did not prevent the Parisian world from taking very great interest in them. Society was divided between the Turkish embassy and the Grand Hotel. We take the English ball first. All visitors to Paris know the great dining-room of the Grand Hotel, and the reading-room that precedes it. Both were cleared for the occasion. Clusters of flags, English, French, and American, with branches of palm, decorated the niches between the gilded caryatides; below these were shields with our arms upon them, and others with the stars and stripes, and pyramids of exquisite flowers and plants. As the crowd thickened people found their way up the winding staircase into the drawing-room on the first floor, through the open windows of which a splendid view of the ball-room was obtained. Later, when the Duchesse de Magenta came in, leaning on the arm of our ambassador, half-a-dozen *piqueurs* in scarlet coats and with huge hunting horns, stationed there, echoed the *fanfares* of Desgranges' orchestra installed on the platform opposite in a thicket of ferns and cineraria. All the arrangements were capital. Most of the patronesses had been indefatigable in their endeavours to sell as many tickets as possible. One lady told me she had sold no less than eighty-four—fortunately, not imitating the *far niente* of the Duchesse de Chartres in the matter, who refused to trouble her friends with requests for subscriptions. When the Maréchale arrived she was met at the door by Lord Lyons, and the dancing was stopped while she walked round the *salle de bal*, and then through an avenue of plants to a drawing-room. The Duchesse, however, soon returned to the ball room, where she took a place near the orchestra, preferring the proximity of the music and dancers to the solitary grandeur of a presidential *fauteuil*.

Flower and Kitchen Garden.

Bedding Plants.—With an outdoor temperature equal to that of an ice-house at night, and somewhat like a Turkish bath in the daytime, I envy not the cultivator who has the care of a large collection of bedding plants in small pots. The mere labour of watering in such weather is very great. The plants would do far better, and not require a fourth of the labour if they were turned out of the pots into some structure of a temporary character, where the necessary protection could be easily applied. There are various ways of providing cheap temporary places for saving labour in the management of bedding plants; and, in fact, almost anything is better than keeping them baking in small pots. In some places this accommodation is provided by opening trenches four or five feet wide where the ground is vacant in the vegetable quarters. I, however, object, for various reasons, to thus using ground intended hereafter for vegetables, because, in the first place, the ground in the immediate neighbourhood gets trampled so much as to render it unfit for cropping for some time; secondly, I am in favour of a hard surface for standing the plants on when turned out of the pots, with just sufficient soil placed firmly between and over the balls to induce them to make a host of fibrous roots, but not deep enough to encourage too much growth; and thirdly, it is always desirable to economise labour by placing those extemporised nurseries as near the water supply as possible. Having, therefore, selected a suitable spot in a sheltered position, the next consideration is the arrangement of the surface into handy-sized beds to facilitate the necessary watering and covering. The former will be reduced to a minimum, but the coverings will probably require to be placed on every evening. In nearly all gardens there should be a number of stout boards or planks for the convenience of carrying out any necessary alterations in winter cleanly and expeditiously; and with those, and some short stakes driven in alternately on each side to keep the planks firmly on the edge in the required position, a number of temporary wooden frames will be formed in a very short time. Stout laths or hollyhock stakes may be laid across, at intervals of 3 feet, to support the mats or other protecting materials used, and a nail may be driven through the ends to keep them in their proper places. About 6 feet is a very convenient width for watering or covering. I have sometimes, when short of planks, used bundles of pea stakes laid end to end for forming the outside of temporary bedding-plant protectors, and, with an extra band round them to keep the sprays close together, they form no bad substitute for planks. However, anyone with a little ingenuity will always discover something near at hand suitable for the purpose. I may say also that much may be done to facilitate arrangements of this kind in winter, when there is not so much pressure upon any department. Assuming that the surface of the ground is level and perfectly hard, about 4 inches of soil may be placed in the frame, and the plants at once planted out almost closely together, and the soil packed in firmly round the balls. Tricolor, bicolor, and all other geraniums that are grown in pots for bedding, may be turned out, and the pots used again for potting off coleus, iresines, fuchsias, &c. In this way our pots do duty sometimes two or three times in the spring. Verbenas, petunias, ageratums, perillas, &c., are better pricked off into boxes, and the growth duly pinched in to keep them sturdy and dwarf. When the planting season arrives, the plants may easily be lifted and the balls divided without any serious check being felt. In fact, this turning out into a cool open air structure a month or so before finally planting out is a decided advantage, even to the plants, without taking into consideration the important saving of labour.

The Kitchen Garden.—In order that vegetation may make proper progress, stir the surface of the soil frequently and well amongst growing crops, by means of the hand-sacrifier, Dutch and draw hoes. Unctuous, stiff, wet soils must be methodically trenched, exposing as much of them as possible to the influence of sun and air, in a rough ridged state. Forking, scarifying, hoeing, and otherwise loosening the soil, at all seasons amongst crops is the main point in good cultivation, giving neither vermin nor weeds a chance of existence. Make up vacancies by transplanting, or you tolerate a loss; everything can be transplanted by means of a trowel in each hand, one to open the hole and the other to take up the plant with a ball of earth attached to it. After thinnings, when the plants are established, are made with crape-necked hoes, one in each hand, sharply looked after. Make the last sowing of some late broccoli; prick off all previously sown plants as soon as they can be handled; also, those of Savoys, Brussels sprouts, borecole and other kales. Plant cauliflowers out in succession now, on the coldest, dampest situations you can select, and make small sowings for succession. Thin early carrots, and sow other early kinds in small quantities in order to have always a succession of young roots. Plant beans on stiff cold ground, and pinch the tops out of such as are coming into bloom. French beans, transplanted or up and growing, dredge with dry dust to prevent shanking or canker; shelter, where not under hand-glasses, with boards or boughs. Of scarlet runners, and other runner beans, plant a full crop, sheltering and dredging them as just recommended for French beans. To early plants of celery in frames give air freely, and water abundantly; earth carefully and remove the lights entirely. Young celery for succession, continue to prick out; never allow the plants to get large or drawn previously with large tap roots, if fine, crisp, and well-finished celery is aimed at. The best situation for celery at this season is in partial shade, that is, where tall late peas have been sown in rows, 12 or 14 feet apart, as they always should be, in order to obtain a heavy, perfect crop, and where early crops of spinach, turnips, cauliflowers, &c., have first been taken; between the peas cast out a shallow trench, 6 feet wide, fork into it a good portion of good rotten manure, and plant seven or eight plants crossways in the trench, 18 inches apart. Thus treated, the result cannot fail to be a heavy crop of fine celery, and that with less trouble, labour, and expense, than by any other method, and in this way all the winter crops can be conveniently sheltered and protected from severe frost. Sow lettuces once a fortnight in drills, on well-prepared ground, to be thinned by hand or hoe; they will grow away much freer without "bolting" from seed, than when transplanted in hot dry weather. Of peas continue to sow late varieties at good distances apart, in order to obtain good and perfect crops, and partial shade for intermediate cropping. All late kinds and strong growers should be first stopped when 2 feet in height, and three or four times afterwards, in order to get heavy crops. Manure and fork the ground between crops of seakale that have been cut; thin the crowns early to two or three shoots, according to strength, and apply dredgings of soot pretty freely in rainy, dark, cloudy weather. Tomatoes should be planted out against walls, close fences, under hand-glasses at the bottom of steep sloping banks, or in warm valleys against stakes, &c.; they may be trained and led with one shoot up to any bare spots on walls between fruit trees, then stopped to fill up. The tomato is a wholesome fruit not grown or made use of in this country to the extent it should be. Radishes, mustard and cress, chervil, and other salading, sow little and often.—*The Garden.*

Nick-Nacks.

Tit for Tat.—"Boy," said an ill-tempered old fellow to a noisy lad, "what are you hollerin' for when I am going by?" "Humph!" returned the boy, "what are you going by for when I am hollerin'?"

"For whom are you concerned?" asked a judge of a witty lawyer. "I am *concerned* for the defendant, may it please your Honor, but I am *retained* by the plaintiff," was the reply.

"It is my business to sound the trumpet of patriotism," recently said a stump speaker. "That's no excuse for so constantly blowing your own horn!" exclaimed one of his auditors.

An agricultural society offered a premium for the best means of *irrigation*. A farmer reading it *irritation*, took his wife to the fair, feeling sure he would win the prize.

"Do you think raw oysters are healthy?" asked a lady of her physician. "So far as I know, they are; I never knew one to complain of being out of health."

The women who have been admitted to the Agricultural College in Michigan are said to behave in a very *gentlemanly* manner.

What is the difference between an oyster and a chicken? One is best right out of the shell, and the other isn't.

The least desirable station in life is a police-station. Keep out of it.

Folk-Lore.—On Monday morning last a young man, on taking up the daily paper, turned to the column of the births, and said, "I wonder if there is anybody born that I know?"

A young lady who was looking at a picture representing a pair of lovers standing on a door-step gazing at a moonlit landscape, with the arm of the lover gently enfolding the waist of his sweetheart, appreciatively exclaimed, "What a lovely picture! How *natural* everything is!"

A man named Hog who had been found guilty of murder, laid claim to some relationship with the judge about to sentence him, whose name was Bacon. "I think you are mistaken," blandly responded the judge. "Hog must be hung before it can be good bacon."

The ordinary punishment of the Boston House of Correction is a shower bath: The offender is placed in a very narrow box, with a collar round his neck, and three or four barrels of ice-cold water are poured over him in succession; it is said that it cows and subdues the most refractory.

In April, 1732, it was intimated from Kirkcaldy, that Margaret White of that place, aged 87, had lately cut eight fresh teeth. Her husband, moreover, was in hopes "she may bring him also a new progeny, as she has recovered, with her new tusks, a blooming and juvenile air."

Duncan Forbes of Culloden, when Lord President of the Court of Session, gave every day as a toast at his table—"Here's to every Lord of Session who does not deserve to be hanged!"

"I say, Josh, I war gwine down de street de odder day, an' I see a tree *bark*." "Why, dat am nothing, Sam. I seed one *holler* once." "Wal, I seed de same tree *leave*." "Ya! ya! ya! Did he take his *trunk* wid him?" "No: he left dat for *board*."

"If I were in California," said a young fop, in company, the other evening, "instead of working in the mines, I would waylay some miner with a bag of gold, knock out his brains, gather up the gold, and run." "I think you would do better to gather up the brains," quietly responded a young lady; "a man should always first secure what he is most deficient in."

A Texas Joke.—A man named Wells having stepped upon a quicksand in the river near Brownsville, he instantly sank out of sight, whereupon one of his companions remarked, "That's a new way of sinking wells."

A candidate for a situation as school-teacher in Florida, being asked the shape of the earth, replied, "Well, some folks likes it round and some likes it flat, and I've jinnerly teached it both ways."

An American actor was pressing familiarly on Mr. Macready at rehearsal, and was checked by the rebuke: "Sir, do you want to shake hands with your king?"—"I don't know about that," was the reply, "I always do so with my own president."

When Kemble was superintending the building of Covent Garden Theatre, the following "neat" epigram was written:

"Actor and architect, he tries
To please the critics one and all:
This bids the private tiers to rise,
And that the public tears to fall."

"In the absence of globes, how do you illustrate the shape of the earth to your scholars?" asked a committee of a school-teacher. "I shows 'em my head," was the reply.

The Detroit *Free Press* says an old man of that city has played ninety thousand games of checkers. What a checkered career that old man must have had.

"Ef de white folks be so dark as dat out dar," said a negro who was gazing at some Japanese, "I wonder what is de color ob de black folks?"

Ornithologists have often wondered that birds are not melancholy in the morning, as their little bills are then all over dew.

Edmund Kean was complaining to Mrs. Garrick of the unfairness of the newspaper criticisms on his acting. "You should write your own," said the old lady, then nearly a hundred years old: "*Davy always did.*" This lively speech was, however, scarcely true, though Davy often prompted, or "inspired," the critiques on his acting.

At an exhibition of pictures, a Scotch baker and a facetious friend were examining a picture with a number of rocks in the foreground. Quoth Batchy, "Thae rocks are like lumps o' dough." "Well," said his friend, "you shouldna find fault wi' that when the puir chiel o' a painter maks his bread out o' them!"—*Book of Scottish Anecdote.*

"First class in geography take your places. Now then, why is the Connecticut river so called?" "'Cause, mem, it *connects* Vermont and Connecticut and *cuts* through Massachusetts."

Newspapers should send only such reporters to cattle shows as are accustomed to pens.

The seamstress' motto—As you sew, so shall you rip, especially if you can sew only so-so.

About the best schism that a man can be guilty of is witticism.

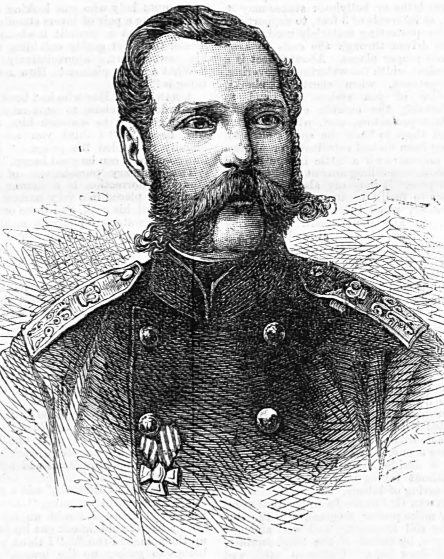
Bishop Warburton and Quin were debating the execution of Charles I. "By what laws did those regicides justify it?" said the bishop. "By all the laws he left them," was the reply. Quin's humour was of a very high order. He and Foote, and Macklin amply sustain the credit of their profession in this department.

Thrift in Food and Dress.—Now, no man will deny—certainly no man who is past forty-five, and whose digestion is beginning to quail before the lumps of beef and mutton which are the boast of a British kitchen, and to prefer, with Justice Shallow, and, I presume, Sir John Falstaff also, "any pretty little tiny kickshaws"—no man, I say, who has reached that age, but will feel it a practical comfort to him to know that the young ladies of his family are at all events good cooks; and understand, as the French do, thrift in the matter of food. Neither will any parent who wishes, naturally enough, that his daughters should cost him as little as possible; and wishes, naturally enough also, that they should be as well dressed as possible, deny that it would be a good thing for them to be practical milliners and mantua-makers; and, by making their own clothes gracefully and well, exercise thrift in clothing.—*Charles Kingsley.*

A North Fisher-Wedding.

When Saturday came, all the friends of the bride or bridegroom who had "gotten a call" to the wedding of Annie Mair and Charley Wilson assembled respectively at the houses of their parents. Malcolm had received an invitation from both, and had accepted that of the bride.

Whiskey and oat-cake having been handed round, the bride, a short but comely young woman, set out with her father for the church, followed by her friends in couples. At the door of the church, which stood on the highest point in the parish, a centre of assault for all the winds that blew, they met the bridegroom and his party: the bride and he entered the church together, and the rest followed. After a brief and somewhat bare ceremony they issued—the bride walking between her brother and the groomsman, each taking an arm of the bride, and the company following mainly in trios. Thus arranged they walked eastward along the high road to meet the bride's *first-foot.*



ALEXANDER II., CZAR OF RUSSIA.

They had gone about half-way to Portlossie, when a gentleman appeared, sauntering carelessly towards them, with a cigar in his mouth. It was Lord Meikleham. Malcolm was not the only one who knew him; Lizzie Findlay, only daughter of the Partan, and the prettiest girl in the company, blushed crimson; she had danced with him at Lossie House, and he had said things to her, by way of polite attention, which he would never have said had she been of his own rank. He would have lounged past, with a careless glance, but the procession halted by one consent; and the bride, taking a bottle and glass which her brother carried, proceeded to pour out a bumper of whiskey, while the groomsman addressed Lord Meikleham.

"Ye're the bride's firstfut, sir," he said.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Lord Meikleham.

"Here's the bride, she'll tell ye."

Lord Meikleham lifted his hat.

"Allow me to congratulate you," he said.

"Ye're my first fut," returned the bride. eagerly yet modestly, as she held out to him the glass of whiskey.

"This is to console me for not being in the bridegroom's place, I presume; but notwithstanding my jealousy, I drink to the health of both," said the young nobleman, and tossed off the liquor. "Would you mind explaining to me what you mean by this ceremony?" he added, to cover a slight choking caused by the strength of the dram.

"It's for luck, sir," answered Joseph Mair. "A first fut wha wadna bring ill luck upon a new-married couple, maun aye du as ye hae dune this meenute—take a dram frae the bride."

"Is that the sole privilege connected with my good fortune?" said Lord Meikleham. "If I take the bride's dram, I must join the bride's regiment. My good fellow," he went on, approaching Malcolm, "you have more than your share of the best things of this world."

For Malcolm had two partners, and the one on the side next Lord Meikleham, who, as he spoke, offered her his arm, was Lizzy Findlay.

"No as shares gang, my lord," returned Malcolm, tightening his arm on Lizzy's hand. "Ye maunna gang *wi'* ane o' oor customs to gang *agane* anither. Fisher fowk 's ready enough to pairt wi' their whusky, but no wi' their lasses!—Na, haith!"

Lord Meikleham's face flushed, and Lizzy looked down, very evidently disappointed; but the bride's father, a wrinkled and brown little man, with a more gentle bearing than most of them, interfered.

"Ye see, my lord—gin it be sae I maun ca' ye, an' Ma'colm seems to ken—we're like by oorsel's for the present, an' we're but a rouch set o' fowk for sic like 's yer lordship to haud word o' mou' wi'; but gin it wad please ye to come ower the gate ony time i' the evenin', an' tak yer share o' what's gauin', ye sud be wal come, an' we wad coont it a great honour frae sic's yer lordship."

"I shall be most happy," answered Lord Meikleham; and taking off his hat, he went his way.

The party returned to the home of the bride's parents. Her mother stood at the door, with a white hankerchief in one hand and a *quarter* of oat-cake in the other. When the bride reached the threshold, she stood, and her mother, first laying the handkerchief on her head, broke the oat-cake into pieces upon it. These were distributed among the company, to be carried home and laid under their pillows.

The bridegroom's party betook themselves to his father's house, where, as well as at old Mair's, a substantial meal of tea, bread and butter, cake, and cheese was provided. Then followed another walk, to allow of both houses being made tidy for the evening's amusements.

About seven Lord Meikleham made his appearance, and had a hearty welcome. He had bought a showy brooch for the bride, which she accepted with the pleasure of a child. In their games, which had already commenced, he joined heartily, gaining high favour with both men and women. When the great clothes-basket full of *sweeties,* the result of a subscription among the young men, was carried round by two of them, he helped himself liberally with the rest; and at the inevitable game of forfeits met his awards with unflinching obedience; contriving, ever through it all, that Lizzy Findlay should feel herself his favourite. In the general hilarity, neither the heightened colour of her cheek, nor the vivid sparkle in her eyes, attracted notice. Doubtless some of the girls observed the frequency of his attentions, but it woke nothing in their minds beyond a little envy of her passing good fortune.

Meikleham was handsome and a lord; Lizzy was pretty though a fisherman's daughter: a sort of Darwinian selection had apparently found place between them; but as the same entertainment was going on in two houses at once, and there was naturally a good deal of passing and repassing between them, no one took the least notice of several short absences from the company on the part of the pair.

Supper followed, at which his lordship sat next to Lizzy, and partook of dried skate and mustard, bread and cheese, and beer. Every man helped himself. Lord Meikleham and a few others were accommodated with knives and forks, but the most were independent of such artificial aids. Whiskey came next, and Lord Meikleham, being already, like many of the young men of his time, somewhat fond of strong drink, was not content with such sipping as Lizzy honoured his glass withal.

At length it was time, according to age-long custom, to undress the bride and bridegroom and put them to bed—the bride's stocking, last ceremony of all, being thrown amongst the company, as by its first contact prophetic of the person to be next married. Neither Lizzy nor Lord Meikleham, however, had any chance of being thus distinguished, for they were absent and unmissed.—*George Macdonald's "Malcolm."*

Andersen and Tennyson.

Hans Christian Andersen, the great Danish novelist, has written a simple and touching account of a recent interview he had with the Poet-Laureate. He says:

"That was a melancholy meeting between me and the great English poet, in his quiet, unpretending home on the Isle of Wight. Fifteen years before I had visited him in company with Charles Dickens. Then we were in the best of humour, Dicken's sparkling wit carrying away with it not only poor me, who have always had a weakness for humour, but even the grave Tennyson, who looks as if it cost him a labour to smile. At that time Tennyson was a fine-looking man, with black hair and beard, and his face was scarcely furrowed. I thought I had greatly changed in those fifteen years, but he had evidently grown old much faster. As we shook hands we looked in each other's eyes, and his filled with tears. Why I don't know exactly. I suppose it was a tribute paid to the memory of Charles Dickens. indeed, the words he uttered were:

"'And, this time you come alone, Mr. Andersen. Do you remember the theatrical performance at Gadshill?'

"Why should I not? The play was *London Assurance*, and the leading part was given by Charles Dickens. That was in 1858, and among the audience were Charles Reade, Delane, and others whose names have since become famous.

"'What a time we had!' exclaimed Tennyson.

"'Yes,' I replied; 'and do you remember getting us out of bed at four in the morning, so that we might go with you to the Isle of Wight?'

"Of course he did, and he made me walk with him through the garden, as he had done fifteen years before.

"There was the tablet to the memory of young Hallam. It looked somewhat dimmer than in 1858, but it had been surrounded in the most æsthetic manner with the finest growth of ivy.

"'Ivy seems to be your favourite plant,' I said, to Tennyson.

"'To tell the truth, it is,' he replied. 'Ivy needs no nursing. It knows neither cold nor heat. It is the plan of immortality.'

"'But what about laurel?' I rejoined.

"'Laurel wreaths,' he said, playfully, 'look well enough in pictures, but in reality they wither too soon.'

"This was a golden saying. How many writers have I seen wreathed in laurel, and how soon it became dry and withered!

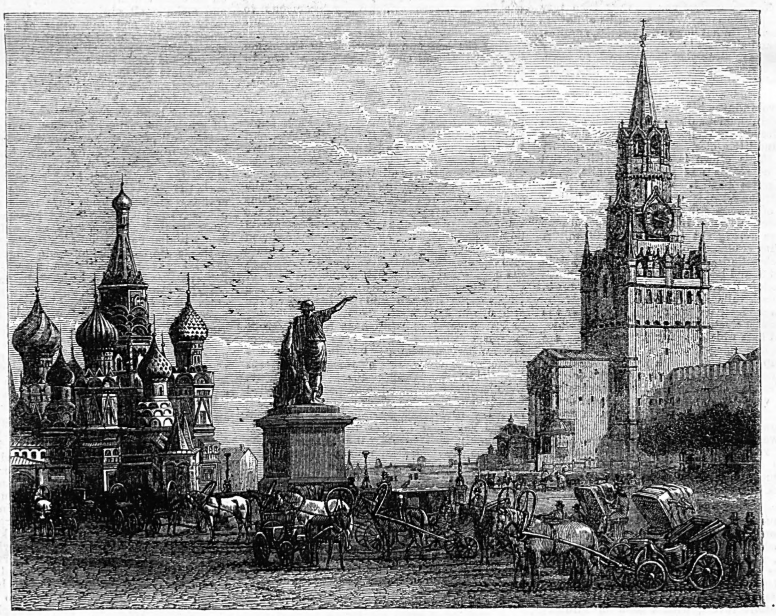
"We returned to Tennyson's library. He showed me the manuscript of his first volume of poems. I opened the first page, 'Where Claribel low lyeth.' To me there is in this quiet poem something indescribably charming. The small country graveyard is described in a few lines with such consummate ability that you actually believe yourself to be there; and while you inhale the fragrant breeze fanned by the branches of the trees, you seem to hear, as if coming from far away, the 'ancient melody' which will be sure to vibrate in your heart when you read Claribel, provided you have a poetical vein in your bosom.

"'Tell me about dear Scandinavia,' said Tennyson, to me.

"'When I left the Sound,' I replied, laughing, 'it was raining, and the Kattegat was lashed into fury.'

"'Now,' he rejoined, 'that Kattegat of yours is horribly destructive of shipping craft, but I take it to be the most interesting sea in Europe. Old Kanneguy, the man-eating giant, was hurried in it right off the shores of Jutland. Kattegat, the young hero, overpowered him, but when he himself died of a broken heart, on account of fair Segrid's faithlessness, he swore he would never be at rest until the whole of Jutland was buried in the blue waters of the sea; and so his spirit storms and raves almost incessantly, giving the sea-painters sublime subjects, travellers the sea-sickness, and marine insurers the headache.

"The transition from the weird and sublime to the laughable was so sudden and unexpected that we both burst into hearty merriment. But this is the peculiarity of Tennyson's genius, that he will suddenly contrast the grandest flights of his imagination with something droll and ludicrous, which will startle you at first, but ultimately fill you with all the more admiration for him.



THE KREMLIN.

"He asked me about my last writings. I pointed to my eyes and exclaimed:

"'How can I be expected to do much when my lights threaten every moment to go out!'

"Tennyson suggested an amanuensis.

"'No, no.' I replied, 'I cannot dictate original matter. I am at a loss to account for the faculty of some writers to do so. M. Thiers told me the other day that he dictated the whole of his 'History of the Consulate and the Empire.' I was amazed at this. I for one must be alone when I write. The presence of a secretary would disturb me. Did you ever dictate any of your works?'

"'No, no,' he replied, eagerly; 'I think like you. Original composition through another person seems to me impossible. All the copy I ever sent to the printer was written with my hand.'

"When I left him he sent to me:

"'My old friend, both of us are past the meridian of life, but I believe there is still a great deal of work in us. You have eclipsed the splendid imagery of the Arabian Nights.'

"I interrupted with a deprecating gesture, saying:

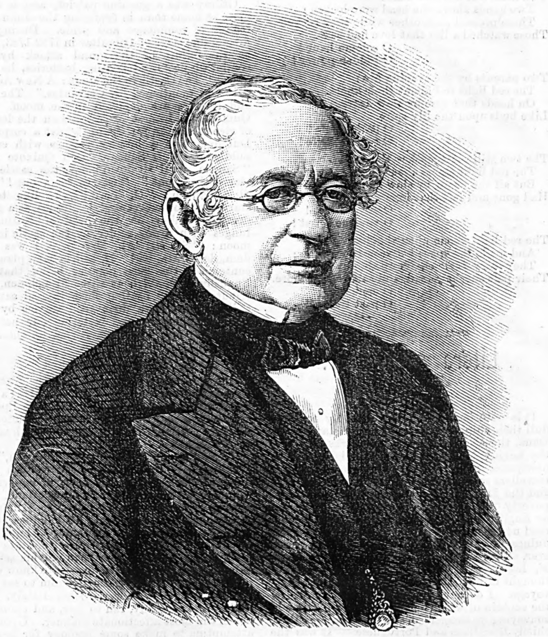
"'And you have verified what Macaulay wrote about your splendid language—that English in the right hands can sound as melodious as the tongues of Italy or Spain.'

"'We part, then, with compliments,' said Tennyson. 'It is good that both of us are sincere.'

"I am sure I was."

Whipping with the May-fly.

The lake is not large, but it is deep, and graced by numerous trees down to the water-edge along seventh-eighths of its margin. Sir Melton Mowbray, introducing me to the water, wishes me luck, places a gardener's boy at my disposal, and goes back to his Blue-books. The only way of fishing the lake is from a boat, and boat there is none. There is instead an overgrown square washing-tub, used by the boy for fetching duck's eggs from a little island in the centre. You do not dare to stand upright in this remarkable specimen of naval architecture, but you may sit on a rail nailed across, and must balance yourself to a hair if you would avoid a capsize. Having procured a pole I punt to the end from which the wind blows, and it is fortunate that it blows steadily, and not too strongly. Though I have been apprised that the May-fly is out in unheard-of quantities, I can see none. Smaller insects are on the wing, but in spite of the rushes around the edges, and a thickly wooded ravine through which a tributary brook runs into the lake, the drakes are conspicuous by their absence. It is a game of patience, then, in which I have to engage. I am aware that the May-fly is quite as capricious as the rest of the insect creation, and disappears suddenly and mysteriously, without any apparent cause. In angling, too, it is never safe to take anything for granted. At the same time it is with the merest grain of faith that I tie on a most elegantly made fly of medium size. The fish, I find, as I drift and whip, are very lively, and I get excellent sport for the space of an hour; and the trout are all within an ounce of the same size, each being about a pound and a quarter in weight. This is a trifle strange, but so it is. A dozen and one of them lie in my basket, thickset fish, much yellower in colour, however, than I care to see, and as like as peas. It does not require very careful fishing to get them, for the wind assists you in the casts, and the trout take the May-fly boldly the moment it touches the rippled surface, or not at all.



PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF.

The wind drops, and the sun, letting a searching daylight into the bottom of the lake, reveals all its pretty traceried labyrinth of aquatic vegetation. Deep down, cosy amongst the weeds, I descry shoals of perch, and now I am no longer puzzled. In the mud no doubt there are eels also, and perch and eels, it is well known, give the spawn and fry of trout little chance. There being probably few small trout in the lake, the heaviest fish have very likely fallen to my share. On the whole I have done passing well for so brief a time, but sport wholly ceases with the calm. The fish, however, are leaping on every hand, whereas before, when the remunerative fun was fast and furious, not a rise was to be seen. But every trout angler is aware that those frivolous splashes which make most noise and commotion are ominous signs—another illustration, in a word, of the adage, "Great cry and little wool."

Until now I have frequently heard of perch taking the fly. Without going so far as to say I was incredulous on the point, I may here confess I would not believe it except from authentic information. But there is no length of impudence to which a hungry perch will not go; and a humorous angler in the far west of Ireland once told me that the perch of Lough Corrib were, the moment your back was turned, in the habit of climbing up the banks, stealing a worm from the bag, and slinking again into the water to devour it at leisure. That may not have been true. These urchin perch to-day, however, rise madly at my May fly. I am whipping carelessly right and left as the wind wafts me towards the shore, and from a shallow part where the weeds are not two inches under water I decoy something which comes with a bang, and that something to my amazement is a perch. For the fun of the thing, and to thin out the undesirable companions of the trout, I lessen the number by a couple of dozen. The body of the fly looks like a fat caddis worm, and I put the folly of the perch down to that score, but adding a red spinner to test the matter, they still come and pursue both lures close to the punt. The teeth of the game little fresh-water zebras do not improve my May-fly. The imposing feathers become ragged, then as perch after perch is caught the gauzy wings and long tail vanish, and finally there is nothing left but the half yellow half puff sheepswool body, wrapped round with brown silk ribbon frayed and torn. This is a serious loss when, as I have discovered too late, there are but three May-flies left in the brook.—*Gentleman's.*

Lost in the Canada Bush.

Just before we came here the whole settlement had to turn out in search of a settler's wife, who had gone to look for her cow one fine afternoon with two of her own children, and two of a neighbour's, who coveted the pleasant walk and the chance of berry picking. As evening came on and they did not return, much alarm was felt, and when the night had passed, it was thought best to call out all the men. Accordingly twenty men were soon mustered, headed by a skillful trapper, who has been many years here, and knows the bush well. They made a "trapper's line," which means placing the men in a straight line at considerable distances from each other, and so beating the bush in all directions as they advance, shouting and firing off their guns continually. At length towards the afternoon, the trapper himself, came upon the poor woman and the four children, not many miles from her home, sitting under a tree, utterly exhausted by hunger, fatigue, and incessant screaming for help. Her account was, that she had found her cow at some distance from home, had milked her, and then tried to return, but entirely forgot the way she came, and after trying one opening after another, became utterly bewildered. The forest in summer is so unvarying that nothing is easier than to go astray. As night came on, she divided the can of milk among the poor, hungry, crying children, and at length they all slept under a large tree, the night providentially being fine and warm. In the morning they had renewed their fruitless efforts, getting farther and farther astray, till at length they had sunk down, unable to stir from the spot where they were found.

"Do I understand the counsel for the defendant," asked a very fat judge, "to say that he is about to read his authority as against the decision just pronounced from the bench?" "By no means," replied the counsel aforesaid; "I was merely going to show to your honour by a brief passage I was about to read from the book, what an intolerable old fool Blackstone must have been." "Ay! ay!" said the judge, not a little elated; and there the matter ended.